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THE BEDLAM AND POST-BEDLAM POETRY OF CHRISTOPHER SMART

by



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A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled The Bedlam and Post-Bedlam Poetry of Christopher Smart, submitted by Allan J. Gedalof in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

Before his confinement for madness in 1756, Christopher Smart was a cautious, mediocre, neo-classic poet, who kept closely to the rules laid down by his peers. During and after the Bedlam period of his life his verse changed and out of these changes came his greatest work, A Song to David. That poem, first seen as mad, came to be regarded as Smart's one work of merit, and as divorced from the rest of his poetry.

In this thesis, I have attempted to show that the Song should be seen as not standing apart from the rest of Smart's work, but is rather the pinnacle in the rise and fall of his poetic ability. I have attempted to explain Smart's development as a poet by examination of his themes and techniques, particularly those he learned as a result of Bishop Robert Lowth's writings on Hebrew liturgical poetry and Bishop George Berkeley's philosophy. Through an analysis of these influences and the resultant themes and techniques which Smart adopted, I have tried to show that there is a clear development that ties together all of his poetry, and that the development led Smart to a form very close to romanticism.

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Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation
of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight.

Psalms 19:14

CHAPTER I

CHRISTOPHER SMART: AN ENIGMA

Christopher Smart has long been an enigmatical figure on the English literary scene, an enigma in his own age and after. In an age when classicism and romanticism were opposed camps, Smart managed in his poetry to combine formal structure with organicism, with lyricism and enthusiasm. In an age when insanity was brutally treated, he could go mad-- and still write verse good enough to win Cambridge prizes. For years a mere hack writer for John Newbery on Grub Street, thoroughly dissipated and seldom sober, he still held the loyalty of such key friends as Samuel Johnson; his poetry was published, much of it widely respected and heavily subscribed. After Smart had spent seven years confined for madness (1756-63)¹, the publication of Song to David sent his contemporaries hastening to look over the poem for evidence of his continued madness. Boswell wrote to Johnson that the poem was "a strange mixture of dun obscure and glowing genius at times."² To the always carefully poised Thomas Gray, who had correctly predicted that Smart would die dissipated and in debtor's prison, William Mason wrote, "I have seen his 'Song to David' and from thence conclude him as mad as ever."³

Later readers were to vindicate and praise the Song to David, and to go so far as to call it Smart's one work of significance. Browning, in "Parleyings With Certain People of Importance," devoted a section to Smart, in which he wrote of Smart's poetry other than the Song:

. . . wealth had run to waste
 Nowise, nor penury was proved by stint:
 All showed the Golden Mean without a hint
 Of brave extravagance that breaks the rule.
 The master of the mansion was no fool
 Assuredly, no genius just as sure!
 Safe mediocrity had scorned the lure
 Of now too much and now too little cost,
 And satisfied me sight was never lost
 Of moderate design's accomplishment
 In calm completeness.⁴

Smart was to Browning, and to many of Browning's contemporaries, the writer of one great poem, a gem that sparkled among the mediocre offerings of a cautious neo-classic author; one who had kept closely to the Augustan "Golden Mean" of moderation in everything, so much the foundation of their poetics. A view such as theirs denies value to the rest of Smart's poetry and fails to recognise the inter-relation of the Song and the poems which preceded and followed it. That the Song is at the summit of Smart's work we cannot deny, but to every summit there must be a climb and after it there must be a descent. Such is the very nature of summits. Smart's climb to the peak is clearly marked in some of the pre-Bedlam poetry. His descent is as clearly marked in many of the post-Bedlam poems. This study will examine the relation of the Song to the rest of Smart's poetry. It will consider the important influences upon Smart of Bishop Lowth, as a Hebraic scholar, and of Bishop Berkeley. It is to be hoped that we shall come to see one closely-knit body of poetry.

Despite the opinions of Browning and his contemporaries, Smart did all the while not remain safely within the limits prescribed in eighteenth century poetics until he broke loose to write the Song. He did not ride along on that rocking horse of an heroic couplet and call it Pegasus, did not consistently minimize his enthusiasm. He was,

rather, continuously experimenting, looking for a viable form and a fit subject for his work: and he continued to do this even after the writing of Song to David. He was to find much of his direction for structure in Hebrew liturgical poetry; of his philosophy in Berkeley and his own form of Neo-Platonism; and his subjects in adoration of God's works and in contemplation of David and Orpheus, singers of praise.

This is not to say that Smart was divorced from his time, that he had little or no connection with the eighteenth century poetic mode. In Raymond D. Havens's article on "The Structure of Smart's 'Song to David'"⁵ where he comments on the elaborate plan and precision of the poem, Smart's strange position is summarized:

The poem may well contain more of these devices than are here pointed out, and undoubtedly those here noticed may have been explained more satisfactorily, but enough has been done to make it clear that the most romantic poem of its time -- ecstatic, sensuous, abrupt, and above all strange -- was constructed with unusual attention to parallelism, formal design, and pattern -- to the ordered beauty of classic and neo-classic art.⁶

It is interesting to note that even the critical views of the Song to David follow the pattern described by the critic Walter Pater in his Appreciations.⁷ In this work he states that we at first perceive a romantic work as being essentially unstructured, and later, having become familiar with the piece and having accepted it, we then perceive the movements and structural devices. What we first saw as romantic lack of design becomes "classic" design, like that of the movements in a Beethoven symphony, or the patterns in a poem like "Adonais" by Shelley. In Song to David, over one hundred and seventy-five years had elapsed before Havens came to terms with the structure of this poem and

gave pause to any who might consider Smart the neo-classic who wrote one great romantic work. That Smart never lived entirely in one world is a fact confirmed by his life as well as his poetry. To adopt any view in which Smart writes the one great romantic work in a desert of neo-classic mediocrity necessitates disregarding all of Smart's other work, and calling it minor, flawed, and insignificant.

That this poetry other than the Song is now viewed as minor and that it is flawed will be shown; but it can by no means be called insignificant, when we consider that it was this early poetry that five times won the Seatonian prize at Cambridge -- a prize instituted in 1750 and awarded annually for the best submitted poem dealing with one of God's attributes. In every one of the five years in which he entered the competition, Smart won the prize; with "On the Eternity of the Supreme Being" in 1750, "On the Immensity of the Supreme Being" in 1751, "On the Omniscience of the Supreme Being" in 1752, "On the Power of the Supreme Being" in 1754, and "On the Goodness of the Supreme Being" in 1756.

In her book Christopher Smart as a Poet of His Time an attempt was made by Sophia Blaydes to place Smart clearly within an eighteenth century tradition. Her point of view forces us to do injustice to much of the poetry. To see Smart in that Augustan tradition she divides the century into three parts, no crime in itself. She calls the second part of the century, in which she places Smart, a period "of aesthetic uncertainty, of increasingly subjective sensibility, which heralded the coming Romantic revival," but was not itself the Romantic revival. After making this distinction, she nevertheless goes on to treat Smart as a neo-classic. To do so she had to see Berkeley's philosophy as

being not essentially romantic, a point which we shall deal with later. She had to avoid saying that "increasingly subjective sensibility" is clearly a romantic phenomenon, no matter what age it appears in, as is the freedom of form implied in "aesthetic uncertainty." In her fear of the label "romantic," she devotes a chapter to a consideration of Smart's enthusiasm, in which she claims that Smart was not an eighteenth century enthusiast, because he did not believe in "private inspiration." The phrase carries a theological meaning of the word enthusiasm, a meaning common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By the eighteenth century, enthusiasm, according to the O.E.D., had acquired the meaning it commonly has now, that of "rapturous intensity of feeling on behalf of a person, cause, etc.; passionate eagerness in any pursuit."⁹ It can be argued that Smart did not believe in private divine inspiration, but it cannot be claimed that he was not enthusiastic, in the sense that was common in 1716, and still is today. This enthusiasm was close to Hazlitt's gusto, the state where the imagination through sympathetic excitement draws out and expresses the total character of its object.¹⁰

It is the blending of the romantic and the classic in Smart that contributes much to his stature as an enigma. Geoffrey Grigson points out just this mixture of classic form and romantic content when he writes:

A first fact of Christopher Smart's poetry is confirmed by the prologue of his life -- the fact of a contradiction in himself, psychologically and intellectually, and between his own psychological constitution -- and the particular, and rather cautious, blend of mind commonly favoured or approved in his century.¹¹

Smart was torn between two poles, because he felt things strongly, because

he did become sympathetically excited, and did attempt to express that excitement. Yet he was a conformist and did want acceptance, and to gain acceptance he had to remain clearly within the boundaries set by his contemporaries. He had to exercise moderation, curb his enthusiasm, limit his subjectivity, and thus gain the favour of the literary establishment. Pressures to conform in such ways were brought to bear during his schooling and increased during the years he spent at Cambridge. Grigson says of this period:

Emotionally he was deeply excited, at times possessed, by the splendours and sparklings of nature. This excitement could be justified by a simple Te Deum laudamus, a Benedicte, Omnia opera, but even then he tended to a heat of imagination beyond reason, which this fellow of the college (as he became in 1745), this classical scholar, could not approve. It invited metaphysical speculation, on the side of 'enthusiasm', which he would be chary of accepting.¹²

The result of the curbing of enthusiasm, of rigid control over excitement, is to be seen in the style of the Seatonian poems, a style which Smart was to abandon during the Bedlam period and thereafter.

The first of these Seatonian poems, "On the Eternity of the Supreme Being" of 1750 is decidedly Miltonic in structure. Smart has not yet adopted a lyric form, as he later will. Here the style is lofty and emphasizes the ornate and pictorial. Like the other Seatonian poems, this one is submerged by its style, a style unfortunate for Smart to have chosen. In this poem he writes:

-- O what can words
The weak interpreters of mortal thoughts,
Or what can thoughts (tho' wild of wing they rove
Thro' the vast concave of th'aetherial round)
If to the Heav'n of Heavens they'd win their way
Advent'rous, like the birds of night they're lost,
And delug'd in the flood of dazzling day.¹³

The diction is heavy here, and the sense contorted; we are faced with

the Kit Smart who can change a snowball into a "snowy orb." In spite of this, we can still find in addition to the clumsy words and parenthetical Miltonic remarks some of the devices and images which were later to appear in the Song to David.

In the central section of the first Seatonian poem, Smart employs a catalogue of things which shall perish at the destruction of the earth. The catalogue was to become one of his favorite devices and was used in the Song, but in this poem it is somewhat arbitrary and does not show the skill with which he later handled the technique. Other devices found in the Song also appear in this early poem. We find the linking of music and heavenly harmony, an idea important in Smart's theology and poetry; and at the end of the poem adoration is linked to music. In the Song and later, music becomes the only vehicle fit for adoration, and giving adoration to God becomes man's purpose in life. In this poem Smart also alludes to the "two Prime Pillars of the Universe/Creation and Redemption," which two pillars will reappear in the Song, although there they are identified by cryptic Greek letters and their number increased to seven. The image of the light of the glow worm likened to the sun is used here, and is one of the images which later appears in both the Song and Jubilate Agno. Further foreshadowing of the Song can be seen in the second Seatonian poem, "On the Immensity of the Supreme Being" of 1751. Consider the following two passages, the first from the second Seatonian poem, and the second from Song to David:

Thence I will go
To undermine the treasure-fertile womb
Of the huge Pyrenean, to detect
The Agat and the deep entrenched gem
Of kindred Jasper-- nature in the both

Delights to play the mimic on herself;
And her veins she oft pourtrays the forms
Of leaning hills, of trees erect, and streams
Now softly on, now thundr'ing down
In desperate cascades, with flow'rs and beads
And all the living landskap of the vale.

Of gems--their virtue and their price
Which hid in earth from man's device,
Their darts of lustre sheathe;
The jasper of the master's stamp,
The topaz blazing like a lamp,
Among the mines beneath.

In both extracts, Smart is calling upon all nature and man to praise and adore God. Yet the first example, as in all the Seatonian poems, is not a lyrical expression of Smart's beliefs but a blank verse meditation. The Seatonian poems contain inversion, suspension, compound epithets, and parenthetical remarks rather than the devices we shall encounter later. The passage above is contrived. Smart is forcing the reflection of nature on the gems, but in the second passage the gems glow in themselves; the jasper beams and the topaz blazes. Smart clearly believes that all nature worships and gives adoration to God and bears the stamp of God and thus the universe, like one of Leibniz's monads or Spinoza's modes. There has been an intense identification here, like the identification in Keats's poetry, where the poet seems to become one with the object described.

Smart, like Keats, was able to be absorbed into the object he was describing; this is perhaps most easily seen in Smart's description of his cat Jeoffrey in Jubilate Agno. He has a sympathetic "in-feeling," a participation by the poet which induces a similar reaction in the

reader. This can be seen as a reaction to the objectivity of neo-classic verse. In it, participation by the poet was denigrated and a certain psychological distance had to be maintained.

Such distancing is at the foundation of eighteenth century poetics. To the neo-classic, the metaphor, which is the basis of poetic language, is a contracted simile; its value is in stressing a likeness, not an identity. When the metaphor obliterates or goes beyond the sense of likeness, it becomes barbaric. Yet the metaphor in its radical form is a statement of identity, and for the romantic the identification is ideal. Two images become one in the mind of the poet.¹⁴ What occurs in Smart's poems is a primary fusion of God, nature, and the poet's song: the three become one. The key to this fusion is the biblical psalmist David. It is he who opens the second Seatonian prize poem, in which Smart considers himself as a psalmist in the succession of David, the singer of the song. He begins the poem with:

Once more I dare to raise the sounding string,
The poet of my God -- awake my glory,
 Awake my lute and harp . . .
 (I, 227)

David again opens the poem "On the Power of the Supreme Being" (1756) in which David of the Hebrews is identified with Orpheus of the pagans in the following passage:

Orpheus, for so the gentiles called thy name,
 Israel's sweet psalmist, who alone could wake
 Th' inanimate to motion; who alone
 The joyful hillocks, the applauding rocks,
 And floods with musical persuasion grew;
 Thou, who to hail and snow gav'st voice and sound,
 And mads't the mute melodious!-- . . .

. . . in this breast
 Some portion of thy genuine spirit breathe,
 And lift me from myself.

(I, 240-41)

Here, David is invested with some God-like qualities, since David can make the inanimate animate, and can make rocks applaud and snow sing. The triple primary identity of God, nature, and the poet's song is expanded to a six-fold one: the poet, nature, God, David, Orpheus, and the poet's song become a unity. The fusion is, as it seems to be, a complex one. First, there is a fusion of God and nature, as there is in Berkeley's philosophy. Here nature, more than passively declaring the glory of God to the passive spectator, is joined to the viewer in a direct, active perception, in which nature exists concretely as a portion of divine language. As Berkeley maintained, the being of a thing is in its being perceived; and perception is a recreation of that which God is continuously recreating. The God-nature unity becomes the song, since it is in the song that all of nature gives adoration to God, and it is the poet's song which for Smart gives the ultimate adoration. David and Orpheus, the two great singers, are also their own song, a song which Smart implies in the passage cited above embraces all of the natural world. In Smart's mind, David is David's song; for the purpose of everything is to give adoration to God, and David is the adoration he gives, namely his song. When Smart identifies with David, then the song is not only sung to David, but since David is the singer he is also singing to himself, and is himself singing. Smart becomes singer, audience, and song, and the fusion is complete. All of nature passes through the poet, who is David and Orpheus also, and is sung to David, who is also Godly, and to God, to whom one gives all

one's life in adoration. The metaphor has become one of identity, the poet has become the metaphor, and from the point of fusion on all that the poet says is an extension of that metaphor.

We see here that the fusion does not take place suddenly with the inspired writing of Song to David, but develops through the Seatonian poems. The fusion is what Coleridge calls "multéity"-- a "fusion to force many into one."¹⁵ For Coleridge, art must always contain symbols of the living, and the true symbol always partakes of that which it is rendering, like the sympathetic "in-feeling" described above. It would be difficult to find an eighteenth century poet before Blake to whom this applies more clearly than it does to Smart, who rejects total objectivity, and in whose poetry all of nature and all of man's world is channelled into the "one" through the poet and then launched to heaven and the world by means of the song.

As Coleridge again sets out, things become real only when they fulfil their potentiality and become themselves, and that only when they become guiding principles.¹⁶ This is the case with Smart, where to fulfil their potentiality all things must give adoration to God. This is the reason for their existence. Things become themselves only when they give adoration, when they reflect the glory of their Creator. When the giving of adoration has become a guiding principle, as it so clearly has with Smart, the universal is reconciled with the particular. All things exemplify the guiding principle and thus take on universal significance, the particular being equated with the universal. This is done not by copying the given model, since that is patently impossible, but by translating it into a given medium, a verbal and metaphorical one.

The concept is allied to the Platonic participation of the particular example in an eternal, perfect form. A further link with neo-Platonic concepts can be found in Jubilate Agno, where there are striking parallels to be found between part of Fragment B1 of that poem and the writings of Thomas Taylor, a Romantic Platonist.¹⁷

The fusion of God, nature, the song and the poet, which was the foundation of Smart's greatest work, had to be completed before he could write Jubilate Agno. Only after that could he write a poem with the simplicity, clarity, and distinctness of A Song to David. It is as if an exorcism had taken place, a purging, followed by a rebuilding. Smart had to rid himself of the need to conform, to free himself so that he, like the God he so fervently gave adoration to, could create in his own image. When the fusion had taken place, when Smart was whole, then he could write the purgative Jubilate Agno, in which he became more sure of his own image. It took Jubilate Agno, that palimpsest of Smart's sufferings, for him to come to terms with himself. Having done so, he could write the brilliantly controlled Song to David.

While the fusion was taking place Smart was still winning Seatonian prizes, as well as working for John Newbery of Grub Street, whose daughter he had married. He was a prolific hack, content to please the public in magazines like The Universal Visiter, The Lilliputian Magazine, and The Midwife or the Old Woman's Magazine, under the pseudonyms of Quinbus Flestrin, Martinus Macularius and Mother Midnight.¹⁸ Smart's contributions to these periodicals were a strange mixture of wit, satire, erudition, and common sense. While he was prodigiously producing this prose, he rose annually to combine

"the detail of earth with the choir of heaven,"¹⁹ his reading with his experience, and nature with science, into a synthesis which won Seatonian prizes with almost monotonous regularity. All things gave adoration to God, and therefore all things could go into his poems -- everything he saw, thought, read and heard. In this Grub Street period of his life, though, all things led to A Song to David. The path was not an easy one, as Jubilate Agno testifies, and neither was it a direct one. In the first and second Seatonian poems we can see Smart getting ready the materials for the Song. The third of these poems, "On the Omniscience of the Supreme Being" (1752) shows Smart at his worst, mainly because it appears to be an attempt to show off erudition. It is not sung by David or Orpheus but by a gallery of worthies, such as Urania, Fame, and Cherubic Gratitude. The poem is pompously didactic.

Whereas the third Seatonian poem shows little relation to the Song, the fourth, "On the Power of the Supreme Being" (1754) clearly points not only to the Song but also to Jubilate Agno. Here the devices of alliteration, repetition, and parallel construction are presented in language which is much less ornate and heavy than that of the previous prize poems. Lines eight to twelve clearly evoke the Song:

'Tis thy terrific voice, thou God of power,
 'Tis thy terrific voice; all nature hears it
 Awaken'd and alarm'd; she feels its force,
 In every spring she feels it, every wheel,
 And every movement of her vast machine.
 (I, 236-7)

The obvious repetition heightens the effect of the lines, and the construction of the lines contains an echo which echoes God's resounding

voice. Here too is Smart's, and Berkeley's philosophy, with God in every spring, every wheel, every movement of nature's vast machine, as Smart moves from the particular, the small spring or wheel, to the whole machine, the universal. This is of course a strange blending of a deistic God who is everywhere manifesting himself and keeping things going, with a mechanistic God, who has set the whole machine-like cosmos in operation and then left it to run on its own. From evidence in later poems, we can only assume that Smart had already opted for his always active God and had not seen the obvious paradox in the lines, or else was unsettled enough at this time to let the lines pass.

The final Seatonian poem, "On the Goodness of the Supreme Being" of 1756, approaches the Song and the resolution of the poetic difficulties Smart was working his way through. Images which are later to appear in the Song appear here: gems, flowers and peacocks all join in the adoration of God. Yet with them still comes the circumlocution in the first line of the following excerpt from the long catalogue in this poem:

Without the aid of yonder golden globe
 Lost were the garnet's lustre, lost the lilly,
 The tulip and auricula's spotted pride:
 Lost were the peacock's plumage, to the sight
 So pleasing in the pomp and glossy glow.
 (I, 241)

The catalogue is at this time Smart's favorite device, and it is to be used extensively in the Song and in modified form in Jubilate Agno. All the items in this catalogue are called upon by Smart to unite and join the poet in praise of God. The garnet that appears here had already been used in the fourth Seatonian poem, and the pride of the

flowers and the peacock's beauty appear in stanza LXII of the Song:

The pheasant shows his pompous neck;
 And ermine, jealous of a speck,
 With fear eludes offence:
 The sable, with his glossy pride,
 For ADORATION is descried.
 Where frost the waves condense.
 (I, 362)

While the ideas in the last Seatonian poem are similar to those in the Song, and the language is comparable, there is a difference in perspective. We noted earlier how in the first Seatonian poem, "On the Eternity of the Supreme Being," the adoration and singing of praise was imposed on the things described, rather than seeming to come naturally from them. In this final Seatonian poem, this is still the case. In the example above, objects derive their beauty from the sun, or seem to have their beauty imposed superficially by God. In the Song however, things reveal their attributes naturally in adoration of God, a technique possible only when Smart has achieved his sympathetic "in-feeling," when the fusion is complete. The poet then feels himself a part of everything, and the poet is the description as well as the thing described.

In "On the Goodness of the Supreme Being" we also find many of the particular devices later to be used in the Song, such as the parallelism, repetition, alliteration and assonance in the following extract:

. . .-- the solemn scene
 The sun through storied panes surveys with awe,
 And bashfully with-holds each bolder beam.
 Here, as her home, from morn to eve frequents
 The cherub Gratitude;-- behold her eyes!
 With love and gladness weepingly they shed
 Extatic smiles, the incense, that her hands

Uprear, is sweeter than the breath of May
 Caught from the nectarine's blossom, and her voice
 Is more than voice can tell; to him she sings,
 To him who feeds, who clothes and who adorns,
 Who made and who preserves, whatever dwells
 In air, in steadfast earth, or fickle sea.
 Oh he is good, he is immensely good!
 Who all things form'd, and form'd them all for man;
 (I, 242)

The first two lines contain the alliteration of s's in solemn, scene, sun, storied, and surveys; the third line the b's in bashfully, bolder and beam; and the fourth the h's in here, her, and home. There is also the assonance of the vowel sounds in storied, with-holds, bolder, home, and behold, and in here, eve, frequents, and beam.

Perhaps most interesting of the devices, and most characteristically Smart's, is the complex repetition in the last six lines of the passage. Here to him is the first repeated, then the who repeated to set up a rhythm that carries along the lengthier phrase which follows the repetitions. The rhythm set up by the who's carries over to the line "In air, in steadfast earth, or fickle sea," and gives this line growing power. The rhythm is picked up again in the last two lines of the passage where two further types of repetition are introduced: in the second last line there is repetition with addition, and immensely is added to the second good to emphasize God's goodness; God's beneficence to man is accentuated in the last line by the reversal of all and form'd in the first and second parts of the line. This brings about not only emphasis but also balance. An interesting effect is gained in the second last line where the stress is on the he in the first he is of the line, and on the is in the second. The shift of the stress gives a very compelling reading to the line. In the next line, there are two stresses on each of all and form'd. The fifth

stressed word in this iambic pentameter is man, which takes on significance in the line because of its singularity. It becomes even more important because it balances the who at the beginning of the line, the who having already taken on significance in the series of repetitions in the previous lines. Through this effect, not only is the line strengthened, but by analogy so is the link between God and man.

The last thirteen lines of the poem are a declamatory prayer, and again contain many of the devices found in the Song. The first two lines of this prayer, with their alliterations and assonances, are repeated exactly as the tenth and eleventh lines, and thus set off the last two lines as a triumphant and very strong conclusion. The pitch of the poem is also elevated by such parallelisms as:

Assuming passions to enforce thy laws,
 Adopting jealousy to prove thy love:
 (I, 244)

The statements are parallel grammatically, and there are parallels in sound as well, with both lines having the initial a sound, the final word beginning with l, the repetition of the p, the central to, the penultimate thy, and the e sound in enforce and jealousy. The pattern is a schematic one, and can be seen more clearly below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<u>A</u> ssuming	<u>p</u> assions	<u>t</u> o	<u>e</u> nforce	<u>t</u> hy	<u>l</u> aws,	
<u>A</u> dopting	<u>j</u> ealousy	<u>t</u> o	<u>p</u> rove	<u>t</u> hy	<u>l</u> ove:	
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>

The pattern seems complex, but is mathematically precise and simple. It achieves a perfect balance not only of the two lines, but also a balance within the lines taken separately. The effect is not unlike

that achieved by Keats when he set out to:

Let us find out, if we must be constrained,
Sandals more interwoven and complete
To fit the naked foot of poesy.²⁰

Saintsbury claimed that with Keats begins the deliberate and frequent use of assonance in English poetry,²¹ but we see here that some sort of argument can be made for Smart. In any case, this poem is more complex, and has more gusto than any of the previous Seatonian poems, and shows most clearly the techniques Smart will later improve and use in the Song.

After this last Seatonian poem was written in 1756, Smart became seriously ill. He probably suffered then from the same sort of madness which was to force his family to confine him later in that year. He recovered from this first bout with madness, and before his long confinement he wrote an extremely important poem titled "Hymn to the Supreme Being: On Recovery from a Dangerous Fit of Illness." It is in this poem that Smart, the formerly conformist poet, heralds the breaking of the bonds which had forced his Seatonian poems into their uncomfortable classic molds. In this last original poetic effort before his long confinement (his prose translation of the works of Horace appeared in the same year), he adopts the lyric form and parts ways with neo-classic conceptions. It is unfortunate that he parted with his sanity at the same time, and that his Augustan proponents deserted him and damned all of his verse that followed. Having accepted the earlier verse, it would seem that the only credible reason for such damnation would be the unfamiliarity of the technique and style rather than a diminution of quality.

In this "Hymn" Smart begins to speak in personal tones rather

than attempting to obscure himself behind stylized verse. This tendency toward self-revelation, odious to the confirmed neo-classic, is to mark all of Smart's later work.²² The poem begins with an incident from Isaiah 38, in which God postpones the death of Hezekiah for fifteen years. Smart relates his own illness and recovery to that of Hezekiah who was allowed to recover because of his prayers.²³ In drawing the obvious parallels, Smart is dedicating himself to a life of prayer and adoration of God, as he points out in the eighth stanza of the poem:

But soul-rejoicing health again returns,
 The blood meanders gentle in each vein,
 The lamp of life renew'd with vigour burns,
 And exil'd reason takes her seat again--
 Brisk leaps the heart, the mind's at large once more,
 To love, to praise, to bless, to wonder, to adore.
 (I, 246)

This echoes the Seatonian poems, and it is largely to them that we look in this "Hymn." Most of the poem is a rehashing of the catalogues of the Seatonian poems, four of whose titles are referred to in the first two lines of the tenth stanza. The "Hymn" is distinguished from the latter poems by its personal tone, and by the dedication which Smart makes. In the thirteenth stanza there is a vow which Smart was to keep for the remainder of his somewhat sorry life:

Glow, glow my soul, with pure seraphic fire;
 Deeds, thoughts, and words no more his mandates break,
 But to his endless glory work, conceive, and speak.
 (I, 247)

The rest of Smart's work fulfils this vow, and speaks of the glory of God. The "Hymn" itself is not without its better moments, like the startlingly Wordsworthian line in both diction and thought "My mind lay open to the powers of night." The poem does not, however, have the

complexity we found in parts of the Seatonian poems, or that we will find in the Song. Perhaps the most significant facts are the choice of the lyric form and the marked change from objectivity to subjectivity. This form and this quality are to mark all of Smart's later verse.

On the evidence of Jubilate Agno we know that Smart reassessed his position during his period of confinement. Before this period he had been a prolific hack for the most part, and had written with the clear intention of pleasing an audience. To be appreciated by that audience, he had to remain clearly within the traditions of his age, and his Seatonian poems were successful because they did show a mastery of the Miltonics and other techniques which the neo-classic age demanded. During his confinement he withdrew from this tradition, and turned to two things which are foreshadowed in the "Hymn to the Supreme Being": his religion and the writing of lyric poetry.

The shift to the subjective poem was not as drastic a change as some would have us believe. Two poems, published in 1751 and 1752 are personal lyrics, and show Smart's earlier interest in the form. The first, the "Hop-Garden," was published in 1752 but written in Smart's adolescence. First looked at, it is an experiment in eighteenth century Miltonics; looked at retrospectively there are in this poem glimpses of those moments of first sensory impact which were to be used in Jubilate Agno and the Song. In the "Hop-Garden" (I, 142-162), "Now bloom the florid hops, and in the stream / Shine in their floating silver . . .," "silver bleak and prickly pearch" glide through the river, and "bright Chanticleer explodes the night with flutt'ring wings, and hymns the new-born day . . ."

Smart returns to childhood visions with new and deeper under-

standing, just as Wordsworth was later to do with his early memories. These memories of childhood were incorporated into the poetry which was to come out of the period during and after his confinement. In the "Hop-Garden" there is:

the interaction of the wild and composed, of nature and art, of imagination and reason, of the hard gem of an uncultivated flower and the scythe shaven grass, which was to become a structural integrator of Smart's vision.²⁴

We see this integration in the Seatonian poems, where Smart is combining all that he saw with all that he read, all his first-hand with his second-hand experiences. These experiences are integrated in Smart's mind in a manner similar to that described by Wordsworth in the "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads," where it is said that art of any excellence is produced only by:

a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibilities, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our²⁵ thoughts, which are indeed the representative of all our past feelings.

When Smart becomes subjective, the modification of all that he has seen, heard, and read increases. Even in his most objective works there is still the modification of material that takes place because the materials and techniques employed were consciously selected and shaped by one man. In the "Hop-Garden" Smart turned to nature as the source of his poetic material. In "Lovely Harriote," a crambo ballad²⁶ of 1751, he turned to a generalized sort of nature. In an uninspired but somewhat clever poem, we find the surprising stanza which follows, in what Smart braves Augustan censure and writes:

Pedants of dull phlegmatic Turns,

Whose pulse not beats, whose Blood not burns,
 Read Malebranche, Boyle and Marriot;
 I scorn their philosophic strife
 And study Nature from the Life
 (Where most she shines) in Harriote.
 (I, 188-89)

The stanza may seem insignificant and the poem flippant, but the indication of studying nature at first-hand over book-learning is important. Smart, the scholar of the university, realizes the value of direct apperception. He may later choose to see any shining nature as the reflected glory of God, but we see that in the middle of the composition of the Seatonian poems, he is still looking for a romantic type of beauty. Even in the Seatonian poems, it is the natural world from which Smart draws most of his material, looks for evidence of God's greatness. Life in the world which man has created, the subject deemed most fit for poetry by the Augustans, clearly does not suffice for Smart. He is ready to go on to another world-- one made brighter by the influences of Bishop Robert Lowth and Bishop George Berkeley, and shadowed by madness.

CHAPTER II

BERKELEY AND LOWTH

Interesting as the Seatonian poems might be, there is still a wide gulf between them and the Song, a gulf difficult to bridge. Not only is the poetic technique in the Song different, but the source material used has also been transformed. The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to explain this transformation through an examination of the influence of Berkeley and Lowth. We can find in Smart's Bedlam poetry what seems to be evidence of their respective influences. We can trace a direct link between Lowth and Smart, but we are faced with a thornier problem with Berkeley.

We do not know for a certainty that Smart ever read Berkeley, yet he arrived at a philosophical position so close to that of the Bishop's that we must assume some link. As Grigson writes, it is "as if a study of Berkeley had been the refining and strenghtening agents of his renewed vision" ¹ It is not only in the "renewed vision" that we can find links with Berkeley, but in Smart's rejections and refutations as well. Much of Jubilate Agno can be seen as a series of condemnations of various figures, notably Hobbes, Locke and Newton; and it is to Berkeley that we might again look for a precedent. Both in what he accepted and what he rejected, Smart accurately paralleled the work of Berkeley. D.J. Greene points out many particular correspondences between the two, ² so many that we must dismiss the notion that Smart might have arrived at the same conclusions as Berkeley by following an independent course.

The purpose of Berkeley's work, which began as an attempt to refute Locke's theory of substance and Newton's theories, was to restore man's understanding of his own existence, thereby necessitating a "proper conception of God."³ The determination of man's link with God is at the foundation of all Smart's work, and if we look for a common starting point, we can find it here. At the very basis of all Berkeley's philosophy was the notion that esse is percipi. He explained this as:

That neither our thoughts, nor passions, nor ideas formed by the imagination, exist without the mind, is what everybody will allow. And to me it is no less evident that the various sensations, or ideas imprinted on the senses, however blended or combined together (that is whatever objects they compose), cannot exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving them. --I think an intuitive knowledge may be obtained of this by any one that shall attend to what is meant by the term exist, when applied to sensible things. The table I write on I can say exists, that is, I can see and feel it, and if I were out of my study I should say it existed--meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it. There was an odour, that is, it was smelt; there was a sound, that is, it was heard; a colour or figure, and it was perceived by sight or touch. That is all that I can understand by these and the like expressions. For as to what is said of the absolute existence of unthinking things without any relation of their being perceived, that is to me perfectly unintelligible. Their esse is percipi, nor is it possible they should have any existence out of the minds of thinking things which perceive them.⁴

That there should be abstract ideas Berkeley found ridiculous. Things exist as they are perceived, and since things definitely exist they must be perceived by an infinite mind, which mind is God. When we see, hear, feel, we are communicating with the mind of God. This is not only Berkeley's philosophy, but it is also Smart's incessant prayer. Everything gives adoration to God; that is its purpose. Everything bears the "master's stamp" and is evidence of that master. Just as all of Berkeley's thoughts and sensations are forms of communication with God's mind, so are Smart's. Man too is one of God's perceptions, and the

link thus formed between Creator and creature cannot be broken. It is thus that Smart not only maintains constant awareness of the link, but also works to glorify and praise it. It becomes meaningful to Smart not only because his God formed all these things, but also because he formed them all for man.

The respective bases of the philosophies of Smart and Berkeley could have easily evolved independently, but the correspondences do not end here. Berkeley defined an idea as:

. . . the several combinations of sensible qualities, which are called things; . . . the hardness or softness, the colour, taste, warmth, figure, or suchlike qualities, which, combined together, constitute the several sorts of victuals and apparel, have been shewn to exist only in the mind that perceives them; . . . If therefore you agree with me that we eat and drink and are clad with the immediate objects of sense, which cannot exist unperceived or without the mind, I shall readily grant it more proper or comfortable to custom that they should be called things rather than ideas.⁵

Again it is the perception which is important in contradistinction to the belief of Locke, the so-called disciple of Newton, who maintained that impression per se might be misleading. To Smart and Berkeley, it is only the impression that is real. Smart states in Jubilate Agno:

For an IDEA is the mental vision of an object.

For Locke supposes that an human creature, at a given time may be an athiest i.e. without God,⁶ by the folly of his doctrine concerning innate ideas.

Smart here denies Locke's theory of substance, and does it in such a way that he clearly appears on the side of Berkeley, in close agreement with the latter's theory of ideas. That Smart has been less than fair to Locke has been pointed out by William H. Bond, and need not concern us here.⁷ What is important is that Smart has agreed with Berkeley on

the concept of ideas. The effect of this position on the poetry is far-reaching, for in conjunction with the Biblical influence on Smart, it explains the immediacy of Smart's images in the Song and Jubilate Agno. Smart's theory of ideas has been expressed as: "Their reality in the mind, the abolition of the separation of the mind which perceives from the perceived, burnished and enhanced their existence."⁸ We are back to the subject of unities, which we discussed above. Here, external nature, the mind of the poet, and God become one, not only through a fusion in the creative mind, but logically in a closely worked philosophical system. If the union was complete by the time the Song was written, as we shall see it was, the work that led to the union was largely done in Jubilate Agno. As Robert Brittain says of the "For" sections of this work:

It gives us wonderful insights into his mind and character. We discover that like most good poets he was greatly interested in the advances science was making in his day, and that like most unhappy souls he found relief in prophesying better days to come. He followed public affairs, as well as he was able, with a keen and thoughtful attention . . .

Not only does Jubilate Agno give us the clearest picture of Smart the man and poet, but it is Jubilate Agno which most clearly expresses his philosophy, and shows him to be deeply indebted to Berkeley.

We find, for example, in Smart's discussion of colours, this passage, where he takes exception to Newton's theory of colour:

For Newton's notion of colours is *αλογος*
unphilosophical.

For the colours are spiritual.

For WHITE is the first and the best.

. . .

NOW that colour is spiritual appears inasmuch
as the blessing of God upon all things descends in
colour.¹⁰

We find the same "spiritual colours" in Berkeley's writings, in the first and second dialogues between Hylos and Philonous.¹¹ Philonous begins by discussing colour and shows that no sensible things have a real existence. He then goes on to praise the beauty of creation. Part of this passage is quoted below, even if only to show a certain affinity between Berkeley's prose and some of Smart's poetry:

PHILONOUS: Look! Are not the fields covered with a delightful verdure? Is there not something in the woods and groves, in the rivers and clear springs that soothes, that delights, that transports the soul? . . . Even in rocks and deserts, is there not an agreeable wildness? How sincere a pleasure it is to behold the natural beauties of the earth!¹²

The passage goes on for some length, and Philonous finally and surprisingly affirms the reality of the natural world and the phenomena he has already described:

Seeing they depend not on my thought, and have an existence distinct from being perceived by me, there must be some other mind wherein they exist. As sure therefore as the sensible world really exists, so there¹³ is an infinite omnipresent spirit which contains and supports it.

That is, the colours are spiritual, because they are contained and supported by this spirit which contains and supports everything. All objects bear the master's stamp for Smart as well as Berkeley.

At another point in Jubilate Agno not only does Smart anticipate Blake, but he also carries an early Berkeleian hypothesis to its logical conclusion. In Essay Toward a New Theory of Vision Berkeley attempts to show that our "visual perception of distance, magnitude and situation is subjective, not objective."¹⁴ To do so, he discusses the illusion of the horizontal moon and refers to the fact that the moon looks bigger in the horizon than when it is overhead.¹⁵ Berkeley

is inconsistent in this essay and speaks of two magnitudes: the subjective visual magnitude of the moon, and a "tangible magnitude" which we must take to mean an objective magnitude. For Berkeley, though, there can be no objective reality since esse is percipi. If he is to remain consistent, he cannot claim that the moon seems smaller when it is overhead even though its tangible magnitude remains the same. Smart, it seems, is not only familiar with this reasoning, but has also carried it to its logical conclusion. In Jubilate Agno we find the lines:

For the phenomenon of the horizontal moon is the truth -- she appears bigger in the horizon because she actually is so.

For the moon is magnified in the horizon by Almighty God, and so is the sun.

(B2: 426, 428)

There is no valid reason for saying the moon is not bigger in the horizon, since the moon's being is in its being perceived, and it is perceived as being bigger. "As long as our only evidence for the nature of physical phenomena is the evidence of our senses, and criterion, visual or tactual, that we take for what 'actually' or 'really' is so is as arbitrary and as valid as any other."¹⁶

Blake has adopted this position, and writes in "A Vision of the Last Judgement:"

What it will be Questioned When the Sun rises
so you not see a round Disk of fire somewhat
like a Guinea O no no I see an Innumerable
company of the Heavenly host crying Holy Holy
Holy is the Lord God Almighty I question not
my Corporeal or Vegetative Eye any more than
I would Question a Window concerning a sight
I look through it and not with it.¹⁷

This brings up once again the subject of fusion and the romantic metaphor. There would be little point in discussing Berkeley's philosophy if it were not somehow applied to Smart. Whether Smart knew Berkeley's work first hand, or whether he picked it up like a pollen from the cultural air around him, it is still at the foundation of his poetic vision. As in Blake, the union of the real and the apparent is no mystical rite. It is an epistemological truth for these poets. The metaphor is not one of likeness; if the sun looks like a Heavenly Host, then that is exactly what it is. When Smart sees David as Orpheus, God as Nature, the song as the singer, then in each case the identification is ideal and each is the other.

To this, we can now add Berkeley's associationist view of language, as it appears in The Theory of Vision Vindicated and Explained:

A great number of arbitrary signs, various and apposite, do constitute a language. If such arbitrary connexion be instituted by men, it is an artificial language; if by the Author of nature, it is a natural language. Infinitely various are the modifications of light and sound, whence they are each capable of supplying an endless variety of signs, and accordingly have been each employed to form languages; the one by the arbitrary appointment of mankind, the other by that of God Himself. A connexion established by the Author of nature, in the ordinary course of things, may surely be called natural; as that made by men will be named artificial. And yet this doth not hinder but the one may be as arbitrary as the other.¹⁸

In this view, all language is a set of arbitrary signs. We can be trained to use one set of them just as easily as another. The importance is in the links and associations between words, and their evocative and connotative qualities. In conjunction with this theory, we should consider Smart's statements in Jubilate Agno and in the Preface to his translation of Horace.¹⁹ In Jubilate Agno he writes:

For my talent is to give an impression upon words by punching, that when the reader casts his eye upon 'em, he takes up the image from the mould wch I have made.

(B2: 404)

To this he added:

Impression then, is a talent or gift of Almighty God, by which a genius is empowered to throw an emphasis upon a word or sentence in such wise, that it cannot escape any reader of sheer good sense, and true critical sagacity.²⁰

Because these two statements stand alone as descriptions of Smart's verbal technique, they are of extreme importance. The image used in Jubilate Agno is one from type-casting, in which the matrix receives its impression from a punch and the letter is then cast in the mould thus made. It is both the choice of words and the particular image that are important here. He is "punching" out an "impression," which goes into a mould. The process described, technical as it is, is not a pure act of intellect, not a reasonable composition of poetry. He is "punching," a much more impetuous and dynamic act than composing -- to retain our typesetter's analogy. He is concerned, as is Berkeley, with immediate impressions, with the impact of things on the senses. He does not record a reasoned account of things but rather a subjective reaction to all that happens within and around him.

There is a very close relationship between this and the following statement made by Berkeley:

Ideas imprinted on the senses are real things, or do really exist . . . we deny they can subsist without the minds which perceive them . . . since the very being of a sensation or idea consists in being perceived, and an idea can be like nothing but an idea . . . the things perceived by sense may be termed external, with regard to their origin, in that

they are not generated from within by the mind itself, but imprinted by a spirit distinct from that which perceives them.²¹

Since these ideas are real things, they too can be perceived, and Smart can present them so that the reader can pick out his meaning by the emphasis he has put on a word or sentence. This leads us to the second half of the verse from Jubilate Agno, where the reader, casting his eye upon Smart's words, "takes up the image from the mould" which he has made.

The mould is a construction, an act of reason, and we can take this to be the form of the poem. While Berkeley set Smart free to associate and combine words just as he perceived things, it is also "as if a study of Berkeley had been the refining and strengthening agents of his renewed visions, helping him to . . . maintain his eighteenth century respect for reason, and yet to give more freedom to the excited respectivity of his senses."²³ What Smart has done in Song to David, the most glorious product and practical application of these theories, is to have poured a work that is essentially romantic in internal structure, diction, mood, and tone, into a mould which many have chosen to call neo-classic. It is an interesting combination, and perhaps a questionable one. A rhyming, stanzaic form does not preclude a work's being romantic, and neither does the use of repetition or the evidence of a careful, over-all structure. We shall see in dealing with Hebrew liturgical poetry that this material, which is romantic in its approach to worship, embodies even more technical, carefully planned devices than Smart's work. Walter Pater has pointed out that the difference in romantic and classical poetry is a question of

emphasis more than anything else. In romantic poetry the emphasis is on the content of the work, while in classic and neo-classic verse there is great importance attached to structure.²³ If we accept this -- and we must note that in Pater's distinctions romantic and classic do not emerge as mutually exclusive terms -- then we must accept the Song as essentially romantic, since the emphasis is indeed on content. Even in Jubilate Agno, the technique may have been pre-determined, and great thought given to the type of experiment in verse Smart was to conduct, but we must realize that very quickly the content dominated any other consideration in Smart's mind. It is notable that in the essay where Pater dealt with the romantic and classic labels, he also claimed that we do not at first perceive the structure of a romantic work; it is only with familiarity that we begin to see a classic structure in such pieces.²⁴ Before Havens recognized the structural control in A Song to David one hundred and seventy-five years had elapsed.

It was probably Berkeley who indirectly gave Smart the freedom he desired and needed to write the Song and the poetry that followed it, but that fact does not take us far enough. In addition to a strengthening of his philosophic view and his poetic vision, Smart also adopted a new form. We can find the roots of the associative aspect of this form in Berkeley, but it is to Robert Lowth's work that we must turn to find the origins of many of the other techniques.

While on the basis of weighty circumstantial evidence,²⁵ we must admit to an influence by Berkeley, we can find a more direct link with Lowth. Through examination of Lowth's study, De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum, we see the great stylistic change from the Seatonian poems to the Song and Jubilate Agno. Bond, whose excellent edition of

Jubilate Agno made clear for the first time many of the principles underlying the poem's composition, writes:

In the first place, Jubilate Agno represents an attempt to adapt to English verse some of the principles of Hebrew verse as expounded by Bishop Robert Lowth in his pioneering study, De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum, first published in 1753. Putting its theological content to one side, Lowth examined the Bible as a work of literature, and devoted a good deal of discussion to the rules governing its poetry. Smart certainly knew Lowth's book, and was on familiar terms with Lowth himself; in fact, Smart's family cited his friendship with Lowth after his release from the asylum as an indication that the poet was not altogether unacceptable in polite society.²⁶

Much has been made, and still can be made, of the fact that the Song is a change from Smart's earlier forms to a lyric form of poetry. The poem is Hebraic in its origins. Much of Hebrew liturgical verse was lyrical, as a glance through the Old Testament will indicate, and as this study will show.

Smart's interest in Hebrew did not, however, begin with Lowth. We can claim that it was Lowth who gave Smart the impetus to attempt to adapt the principles of composition of Hebrew verse to English poetry, but Smart's interest in the language began before he read Lowth. Charles Parish, in "Christopher Smart's Knowledge of Hebrew,"²⁷ does a fine job of establishing the extent of Smart's acquaintance with the ancient language. He concludes with the statement:

. . . I maintain that there is no doubt about Smart's knowledge of Hebrew. . . I do not want to generalize . . . but there are some passages among those cited above that indicate a surprising ability in at least certain areas.²⁸

In addition to this, there is the comment made by Ainsworth and Noyes in their study of Smart: "Assuming that Durham School followed a typical grammar school curriculum of that day, we may believe that Smart

went up to Cambridge with a mastery of Greek and Latin grammar and translation, some knowledge of Hebrew"29 This training was carried on at Cambridge, where, according to Sir Charles Mallet's chapter "Education, Schools and Universities" in Turbeville's Johnson's England30

Candidates for the Master's degree had then to fulfill certain further requirements, in which disputations, at Oxford especially, played the largest part, and to take an oral examination, similar to the Bachelor's31 but embracing philosophy and history, astronomy and Hebrew in its scope.

Smart had his M.A. conferred in 1747, and it is clear that he came to Lowth's book with a certain amount of preparation. Yet the extent of Smart's knowledge of the Hebrew language is not as important ultimately as the extent of his knowledge of Hebrew poetic technique. The verbal echoes in the Song and other poems by Smart indicate that the source for his material was not the actual Hebrew poetry but the King James version of the Old Testament. The sources of the technique, however, are Lowth and Hebrew liturgical poetry. Scholarly studies thus far have dealt only with Biblical parallel techniques, of which there are many, but have not discussed the poetry used in Hebrew services. In dealing with this latter material, we should recall that Smart, beginning with Jubilate Agno and carrying on right up to the Hymns for the Amusement of Children was attempting to reform the Anglican liturgy.32 In considering such a reformation, it seems likely that this erudite and wide-ranging scholar would consider the Hebrew liturgy as source material of some sort. If he believed that the New Testament was based on the Old Testament, and he did, this lover of parallelism would see that the new liturgy should in some way be based on the old one. We know that he did this, but we are yet to ascertain the extent of his experiment.

From Lowth, Smart learned that:

The Hebrew poets frequently express a sentiment with the utmost brevity and simplicity, illustrated by no circumstances, adorned with no epithets (which in truth they seldom use); they afterwards call in the aid of adornment; they repeat, they vary, they amplify the same sentiment; and adding one or more sentences they run parallel to each other, they express the same or a similar, and often a contrary sentiment in nearly the same form of words. Of these three modes of ornament at least they make the most frequent use, namely, the amplification of the same ideas, the accumulation of others, and the opposition of antithesis of such as are contrary to each other; they dispose the corresponding sentences in regular distichs adapted to each other, and of an equal length, in which for the most part, things answer to things, and words to words,³³ as the son of Sirach says of God, two and two, one against another.

That Smart was an apt pupil becomes clear as early as the Seatonian poems, and we can return to an example from the last such poem, "On the Goodness of the Supreme Being," published in 1757. If we reconsider the lines

. . . to him she sings,
 To him who feeds, who clothes and who adorns,
 Who made and who preserves, whatever dwells
 In air, in steadfast earth, or fickle sea.
 Oh he is good, he is immensely good!
 Who all things form'd, and form'd them all for man;
 (I, 242)

we find nearly all of the devices described by Lowth above. There is first the simple introduction of the major concept, God, in the "to him she sings," which is then amplified and adorned, as well as repeated in the series of descriptive phrases. Then comes a further variation in the description of the scope of God's influence, and the praise of His goodness. We have here the first two of what Lowth has designated as the most frequent modes of ornament, devices which will be used again and again in the Song and Jubilate Agno. In the last line of the quotation above, we have the third of Lowth's devices; and while it is the most complex of the three, it is also the most brilliantly used

by Smart. He does not use real opposition in the example above, but uses the structure of the Hebrew mode to do something of his own. The whole meaning of the line, and its force, is based on the perfect pairing of the line, as it reflects itself as a result of its symmetry. With this internal balance, there are "things answering to things, and words to words . . . two and two, one against another." An even better example can be found in another two lines which were discussed earlier:

Assuming passions to enforce thy laws,
 Adopting jealousy to prove thy love:
 (I, 244)

The pairing in these lines is perfectly regular, and, as we have shown, quite complex. These lines, however, do not stand alone. If we remain unconvinced that Smart was consciously experimenting with Hebrew modes, we need only recall that the quotations above both appear in the same poem, "On the Goodness of the Supreme Being." The second quote appears in the following passage, where we also find the other devices mentioned by Lowth:

'O all sufficient, all beneficent,
 Thou God of goodness and of glory, hear!
 Thou, who to lowliest minds dost condescend,
 Assuming passions to enforce thy laws,
 Adopting jealousy to prove thy love;
 Thou, who resign'd humility uphold,
 Ev'n as the florist props the drooping rose,
 But quell tyrannic pride with peerless pow'r,
 Even as the tempest rives the stubborn oak,
 O all-sufficient, all-beneficent,
 Thou God of goodness and of glory, hear!
 Bless all mankind, and bring them in the end
 To Heav'n, to immortality, and THEE!'
 (I, 244)

Smart here uses pairs of opposites to illustrate God's goodness, ranging from the quelling of tyrannic pride with tremendous power, to

the gentleness of the florist who upholds the drooping rose. There are also the balances in this section which have been pointed out above, that type of pairing that Smart liked so much. Perhaps the best amplification of the theory of this technique can be found in Jubilate Agno where Smart writes:

For the relations of words are in pairs first.
 For the relations of words are sometimes in oppositions.
 For the relations of words are according to their
 distances from the pairs.
 (B2: 600-02)

The pairing we have found in the last Seatonian poem was no chance occurrence. We see now that it was an example of a carefully planned technique, a device by which the who in the line "Who all things form'd, and form'd them all for man" can be validly equated with the man, since the two are equidistant from the pairs of all's and form'd's. Smart was deliberately creating sound patterns to evoke a particular response from his reader.

In addition to the techniques mentioned above, Lowth also emphasized the antiphonal or responsive character of Hebrew verse, and wrote that "One of the choirs sung a single verse to the other, while the other constantly added a verse in some respect correspondent to the other."³⁴ Lowth cites numerous examples from the Bible, as well as passages which refer to the practice, such as "And the women answered one another as they played . . ."(I Samuel 18:7) and "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3). The verse from Isaiah would, no doubt, have particularly appealed to Smart, who would have heartily agreed. Bond comments on the antiphonal nature of Jubilate

Agno, and writes: "If then, he visualized an actual performance of Jubilate Agno, it was apparently with himself as the second reader or responder."³⁵

In addition to the Hebrew poetry found in the Old Testament, there have been some thirty-five thousand metrical compositions written for the Hebrew liturgy in a variety of manners. These were largely designed to give emotional import to the services and to express intense religious fervour, both qualities which Smart fully endorsed. The bulk of this poetry was written in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by more than two thousand liturgical composers in styles and metrical patterns established for the most part in the scriptures. Almost all were meant to be sung and many of the poets themselves were gifted chazzanim (cantors). Although the emotional tone of these poems was personal, they were all phrased in the plural. In this way they served as both personal expressions of devotion and group recitations. These devotional poems, known as piyyutim, seldom said directly what was meant and usually obscured and concealed their meanings in figures of speech. Quite often they were couched in rare and archaic diction and in allegorical terms; and one is likely to miss the composer's meaning because of the metaphorical thought and imagery, the conciseness and brevity, endless variations of rhyme, and the frequent use of acrostics. Biblical expressions are quoted at every turn, so that without frequent references to the Hebrew classics the reader cannot fully appreciate the poetry. The best of these piyyutim manage to combine all or most of the above, unlikely as it may seem, with clarity and simplicity, and contain noble ideas about the basic problems of life on earth.

We are assured by Charles Parish that Smart knew a certain

amount of post-Biblical Hebrew. This conclusion was arrived at by a careful examination of the use of Hebrew in Jubilate Agno.³⁶ An excellent example is pointed out by Bond, in reference to the verse:

Let Geshem (which is rain) rejoice with Kneeholm.
 Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus for Rain
 and his family and for the plenteous rain this
 day. April 9th 1761. N.S.
 (C: 97)

Bond points out in his footnote "There is no sanction in the Bible for any association of Geshem with rain." This is a particularly fine proof of Smart's knowledge of the Hebrew language, since geshem is rain -- the proper name Geshem and the word geshem are identical in Hebrew. Parish points out many other examples, several of them being puns based on meanings of Hebrew words which evolved in post-Biblical periods. All of this points to a fairly extensive knowledge not only of Hebrew and the Bible, but also of post-Biblical Hebrew liturgical poetry. Careful editors, like J.R. Tutin, have pointed out Biblical verbal echoes in almost every stanza of Song to David, and Brittain assures us that such echoes may be found in almost all of Smart's Bedlam and post-Bedlam verse. No explicator of Smart's poetry, however, has looked to the piyyutim for the origins of many of Smart's techniques such as the use of allegory, acrostics, and rare diction. Lowth was discussing not only Old Testament Hebrew poetry, but all liturgical poetry and an examination of Jubilate Agno will show that Smart attempted to adapt these techniques to English verse. One need only read the foregoing description of the piyyutim to see how well it fits Jubilate Agno and the Song. The expression of intense religious fervour and the emotional quality apply to Smart. The singing of the verse was one of Smart's

prime objectives. Both the piyyutim and Jubilate Agno were written as liturgical works, whereas much of the Bible itself was not. We find in Jubilate Agno and the Song the use of uncommon words, allegory, acrostics, metaphorical thought, and extremely careful patterning. Perhaps most striking is the similar use of allusion, the practice which has made both Hebrew liturgical poetry and Jubilate Agno so difficult to understand. In both, Biblical expressions are echoed at every turn; without reference to the source materials they cannot be fully appreciated. Smart's best effort, Song to David, like the best of Hebrew liturgical poetry, manages to combine all of these devices with clarity, simplicity, nobility of thought, and tremendous emotive power.

Just as some Biblical passages were responsive, so were many of the other liturgical poems. The responsive "Ata Hoo Eloheynu" (Thou Art our God) exhibits many of Smart's techniques. The poem is an alphabetical acrostic, and borrows ideas and phrases from Song of Songs 5:10, Psalms 33:9, 91:1, 145:18, Isaiah 59:17, and Job 26:7. In translation the poem reads:

Thou art our God	
In heaven and upon earth	-- mighty and
	revered
Acclaimed by thousands	-- He spoke and the
	world began
He commanded and all was	-- endless His fame! ³⁷
formed	

In comparison, we can look at one of Smart's responsive verses from Jubilate Agno:

Let Michal rejoice with Leucrocruta who is a
mixture of beauty and magnanimity.

For he that scorneth the scorner hath condes-
cended to my low estate.

(Bl: 61)

In addition to the obvious responsiveness, the second half of the line is a variation of the Biblical line "Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly."³⁸ We should note also the use of the archaic "Leucrocruta," a beautiful sounding name in itself, which is a Plinian animal with the legs of a hart and the breast of a lion.³⁹ The use of rare terms, as noted above, is common both in Smart's verse and in the liturgical poetry. This technique has the effect of removing the language somewhat from the ordinary level and makes it seem more lofty. We are, in fact, often led to believe that that which we do not comprehend is necessarily more lofty and stems from a sphere above that of man.

While the selection from Jubilate Agno is not an acrostic as the Hebrew example is, Smart does use three simple acrostics in the course of Jubilate Agno. In the example above, Smart has introduced something which is typically his own. In the first half of the verse he uses an alliteration of m's flanking the two cr's in Leucrocruta, which in itself has interesting internal balance. The handling of the Biblical quotation is also interesting. Smart extends the alliteration to introduce more s's which give the line a scornful, hissing sound. He establishes a double opposition then in the two halves of the verse. The first is an opposition in meaning, as he comments on beauty and magnanimity in one half of the verse, and talks about scorn and low estate in the other half. The second opposition is a parallel in sound, where he uses the softer m's in the gentler first half, and the scornful s's in the second half. This technique of opposition and parallelism

is one which we have described above as being a favorite Hebrew device, and is one of the Hebrew devices which Smart had most success with.

The use of standardized line beginnings is another of the devices frequently used in Hebrew liturgical poetry. One of the longest such poems, "Avinu Malkeynu" has every line beginning with the phrase "Our Father, Our King."⁴⁰ A different use of this practice is found in the hymn "Ein Keloheynu" (There is none like our God), where the line beginnings are patterned. The first five lines of the poem begin with "There is none like," the next five with "Who is like . . .?" and the last five with "Let us give thanks to."⁴¹

Perhaps a more interesting liturgical device is one described by Lowth, the variation and amplification of a concept after it has been introduced. In the Song, Smart does this brilliantly when he deals with the concept of adoration in stanzas LI to LXXI. In the Hebrew poetry, we find an excellent example in the prayer "Kee Hinei Kachomer," which begins:

As clay in the hand of the potter
Who expands or contracts it at will,
So are we in thy hand, gracious God;
Heed thy pact, heed not the accuser.

The rest of the stanzas follow the pattern:

As _____ in the hand of the _____
Who _____ or _____ it at will,
So are we in thy hand _____;⁴²
Heed thy pact, heed not the accuser.

Smart uses even more complex patterning of words in the Song, particularly in the adoration section, where lines change position according to a pre-determined and carefully followed pattern. The last line in

the Hebrew example above is the sort of theme we come across in Jubilate Agno, as in the line "In my nature I quested for beauty, but God, God hath sent me to sea for pearls" (B1: 30).

Some note should be made of Smart's use of acrostics in Jubilate Agno, perhaps the least successful of his borrowings from the Hebrew. The number of acrostics in Hebrew liturgical poetry is quite high, and many of them are complex. It may be observed that Psalms 25, 34 and 145 are composed so that each verse begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet in consecutive order. In Psalm 37 every other verse begins with another letter in regular order. In the medieval period it became customary for the author to weave his name into the acrostic, as is the case with "Aten l'poali tzedek" (I acclaim the justice of my Creator).⁴³ A particularly complex example is "Eder Vahod" by Rabbi Simeon ben Isaac ben Abun, which consists of twenty-one stanzas in alphabetical order. Each stanza consists of three parts, the first of which follows the order of the alphabet, the second gives the name of the author, and the first letters of the third section cite a biblical passage. This third section is also used as a congregational response.⁴⁴ Smart's simple alphabetical acrostics, two in fragment B2 and a half acrostic in fragment C of Jubilate Agno pale somewhat beside these examples.⁴⁵ They do, however, remain as fine examples of Smart's wit, and are part of the over-all experiment he was conducting in that poem. The attempt is a double one, since Smart probably also knew that the Hebrew letters taken individually had occult power. In Jubilate Agno it seems that Smart is consciously attempting to ascribe such powers to the English letters. As he writes: "For E is eternity -- such is the power of the English letters taken singly" (B2: 517).

Smart's various experimental attempts, which we shall encounter again in a more detailed discussion of the poems, are not as important as are the conciseness of image, the emotive tone, and the careful structure that Smart adopted as a direct result of his partially successful exercises. Just as Berkeley set Smart free to create as he wished while still in a sense controlling his poetic vision, Hebrew poetry had a similar effect. It gave Smart an example he could safely follow. It was written to excite religious fervour and was still carefully and classically planned and executed. It abounded with the numerical patterns and mathematical balances which Smart liked to use. These two major influences on Smart, Hebrew poetry through Lowth and the philosophy of Berkeley, both tended in the same, complex direction. They both set Smart free to write powerful, emotive, associative, deeply excited, but rigidly controlled verse. Not only did they do this, but they also furnished much of the poetic material; Berkeley by presenting to Smart a view of nature with which he could come to terms, and which he could use as the source of many of his images, and Lowth with a poetic technique and a body of verse with which Smart felt a certain affinity.

CHAPTER III

BEDLAM

By 1755, things were going badly indeed for Smart. He had continued to drink heavily after his Cambridge days and had still not learned to handle his finances. He was in debt to his father-in-law, the publisher Newbery, and relations between them became quite strained.¹ To escape these family bonds, he drew up a contract by which he was to write (for an unrelated publisher) for the Universal Visiter [sic] for a period of ninety-nine years. According to this agreement, which Richard Rolt signed as co-author at the same time, Smart was to work for no one else, and neither author could sell or give away his share. If the author could not supply his material, he was to see that somebody else did.² By the time the first issue was published in January of 1756, Smart was unable to fulfil his commitment and Samuel Johnson kindly helped out. Johnson continued to write until June of 1756, when he found out the exact terms of the contract. Then, Johnson recorded that he

wrote for some months in "The Universal Visiter" for poor Smart, while he was mad, not then knowing the terms on which he was engaged to write, and thinking that I was doing him good. I hoped his wits would soon return to him.³ Mine returned to me, & I wrote in "The Universal Visiter" no longer.

On the basis of this association with Johnson and The Universal Visiter we know that Smart was confined early in 1756. He was probably first put into private lodgings, as was the practise of that time, and moved

when it was found that he was not improving. It is known that he lived from May 1757 to May 1758 at St. Luke's Hospital, and was discharged as uncured. His location after that is unknown until he was confined again in 1759, on or shortly after August 13th, probably in Bedlam. As A Song to David was published on April 8, 1763, we can assume that he was released early in that year. The exact dates of confinement are not known.⁴

A great and probably inordinate number of articles have commented at length on the subject of Smart's madness⁵, either affirming or denying it. Smart's contemporaries were split on the subject as well, and conclusive evidence in either direction is yet to be presented. Madness is, of course, a relative designation, and what is madness in one person or in one age may be sanity in another. The religious mania itself for which Smart was supposedly confined might have earned him martyrdom or sainthood under different circumstances. It may be thought, indeed, that the religious mania developed as a result of some other, more deeply rooted disorder. It is now easy to see that this sort of speculation will lead us off in all directions at once. The subject is too tempting for any Smart scholar to avoid. Three comments by contemporaries of Smart may be in order here, to give a very general view. Smart's nephew, Christopher Hunter, published selected poems of Smart's, and in his introductory life of the poet wrote:

his various and repeated embarrassments acting upon an imagination uncommonly fervid, produced temporary alienations of mind; which at last were attended with paroxysms so violent and continued as to render confinement necessary.⁶

In support of this, we have Smart's own statement of being punished in Bedlam "because I am more unguarded than others."⁷ This is a clear

indication that Smart sometimes did lose control of himself and became difficult to handle. In opposition to this view are two other statements, the first by Mrs. Piozzi, and the second by Samuel Johnson:

In every other transaction of life no man's wits could be more regular than those of Smart, for this prevalence of one idea pertinaciously keeping the first place in his head had in no sense, except in what immediately related to itself, perverted him in his judgement at all; his opinions were unchanged as before, nor did he seem more likely to fall into a state of distractio than any other man; less so, perhaps, as he calmed every violent start of passion by prayer.

I did not think he ought to be shut up. His infirmities were not noxious to society. He insisted on people praying with him; and I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart as any one else. Another charge was, that he did not love clean linen; and I have no passion for it.

The battle-lines were clearly drawn in Smart's time, and the controversy will probably continue to provide ammunition to fill aspiring students' and critics' pages and cannons for years to come. Unfortunately, only grape shot has been used so far, and no direct hit has been scored. No matter what the cause of Smart's confinement, the literary results are noteworthy. Out of Bedlam, Bedlam being more a term of convenience than accuracy, came the Song, Jubilate Agno, and the Psalms, and Hymns, the first two of which are Smart's greatest and most complex works.

This appearance of poetry which raised Smart well above the level of a hack was no freak accident of a mad genius. What has already been presented in this paper goes some way toward dispelling that overly-romantic notion. The myth of Smart scraping out the Song with a key on a wainscot in Bedlam has already lived too long. The poem shows too much careful planning for that. In Jubilate Agno itself we find evidence of Smart having begun work on the Song while still working, on paper, on Jubilate Agno. What we are faced with in the Bedlam period of Smart's

life is a propitious combination of circumstances. He was developing, or had just developed, a clear philosophy and learned a new technic; and confinement gave him that extra impetus to break the uncomfortable classic mould in which he had been. R.D. Havens advances such a thesis in his "Assumed Personality, Insanity and Poetry."¹⁰ He argues that retreat into Bedlam was the factor that released such poets as Chatterton, Macpherson and Smart from the inhibitions of the neo-classic poetic mode, and allowed them to adopt a more comfortable, more romantic form. This does not mean that Smart was about to abandon his eighteenth century audience. He writes in Jubilate Agno:

Let James rejoice with the	For the blessing of God
Skuttle-Fish, who foils his	hath been on my epistles,
foe by the effusion of his	which I have written for
ink.	the benefit of others.
	(B1: 125)

Even in Bedlam Smart still had his audience in mind, and Jubilate Agno itself began as a poem for that audience.

Not only has there been a problem in establishing the dates of Smart's confinement, but there was also some difficulty in working out the dating of the poems written during that period. If we are to speak of Smart in terms of a climb to a peak, and a descent from that lofty place, it is useful to know what came before or after what. Fortunately, Grigson has approached the problem logically, and provided a thoroughly acceptable answer. We know that Jubilate Agno was begun early in Smart's confinement and continued throughout it. On the basis of internal evidence, verbal echoes, and the development of other techniques, the Psalms appear to have been written before A Song to David, which was Smart's own new psalm. The stanza form used in the Song was

also used in thirteen separate psalms before Smart used it most effectively in his masterwork.¹¹

If the Psalms and the Song are written with a great deal of control, as they seem to be, then that control was gained during the writing of Jubilate Agno. It is Jubilate Agno which gave Smart that tranquility described by Wordsworth, wherein out of calm he could summon up powerful, yet workable, emotions. Smart definitely had the powerful emotions. It was the working of them into poetry that was a problem. In Jubilate Agno he purged himself of his frustrations and showed his awareness of his difficulties in the metaphorical

Let Hushim rejoice with the
King's Fisher, who is of
royal beauty, tho' plebian
size.

For in my nature I
quested for beauty, but
God, God hath sent me to
sea for pearls.

(B1: 30)

and later in the poem:

Let Barnabas rejoice with
the Herring -- God be gra-
cious to the Lord's
fishery.

For I am making to the
shore day by day, the
Lord Jesus take me.

(B1: 142)

The meaning of the second of the verses is quite clear, but the first presents a problem. When it is read, it seems to make sense and to be quite striking. It is one of the more often quoted verses from Jubilate Agno, and yet no one has explained it. Arthur Sherbo mentions it as one of the verses which is extremely difficult to understand.¹² When the line is reread, the meaning becomes less clear than it first seemed to be, like a Swinburne inversion. When one looks at the words, the meaning that is supposed to be behind them seems to disappear, but one still has the feeling that something meaningful has been said. Searching

for pearls is questing for beauty, and there is not the opposition one first suspects there to be in the line. Yet, like much more of Jubilate Agno, when there are patterned references, and when there are similarities of metaphor, one casts light on the other. The problem is not that Smart must search for pearls, but where he must conduct his search. His sea is one he must return from, for it is a sea of affliction. Smart, always concerned with his "plebeian size," is the King's Fisher. If we invert the name, remembering Smart's fondness for word-play, he is also the Fisher King, who must heal himself and restore his potency. He must return to shore with pearls, and so he does with the Psalms, the Song, and parts of Jubilate Agno. Jubilate is the sea-log of that period when Smart was making his way to the shore, day by day, stormy as the trip might have been.

The poem does not begin as a log of a treacherous journey. It begins impersonally, as an attempt to initiate a reform of the Anglican liturgy, and then changes. The poem, as Bond has reconstructed it after Stead printed it in the wrong order, consists of Fragments A, B1, B2, C, and D, and it is surmised that the original poem was entirely responsive. The verses were written in pairs, the first of the pair beginning with Let and the second with For, as in some of the examples cited above. Since part of the manuscript has been lost we have only the Let verses of Fragment A, the For verses of B2, and the Let verses of D. The Let verses contain almost no personal references by Smart until we come to Fragment D. Before that point, they are confined to the For verses and dictated by an associative, organic pattern. The Let verses of Fragment A, when the poem was still a carefully controlled artistic and religious work, show the most carefully pre-planned and

least organic structure of the poem. Bond claims that they

are the most carefully composed of any in the poem and show a structural variety not to be found in the later verses. There is also some attempt to associate the Biblical personages with appropriate animals -- an attempt foredoomed to failure by the sheer scarcity of animals in the Bible, but nevertheless evidence of logical plan. One suspects that if this opening portion had survived intact its tone and content would be found to resemble in many ways those of parts of the Anglican service, and that the missing For verses might lack the strong personal reference which characterizes many of the surviving ones later in the poem.¹³ At any rate, the personal note is not sounded at all in Fragment A.

Although Bond is correct in assuming that Fragment A sounds no personal note, he is wrong in off-handedly claiming that Fragment A shows the most structural variety of the poem. We have already seen that Smart did not abandon his experiment after Fragment A in our consideration of Smart's attempts to adapt the techniques of Hebrew poetry in Jubilate Agno. The fact that he became more personal does not make the poetry any worse. It is probably quite the contrary. The most effective passages in the poem are the personal ones, where Smart describes his own plight. Consider the effectiveness of:

Let Elkanah rejoice with
Cymindis the Lord illum-
inate us against the
powers of darkness.

For the officers of the
peace are at variance
with me, and the watch-
man smites me with his
staff.

(B1: 90)

or the pathos of the man who can write:

Let Micah rejoice with the
spotted Spider, who coun-
terfeits death to effect
his purposes.

For they lay wagers touch-
ing my life. -- God be
gracious to the winners.

(B1: 92)

Probably Smart is at his best in Jubilate Agno when he is personal.

The introduction of non-Biblical animals after Fragment A has little

to do with the poem's effectiveness. Smart continues to draw on all his knowledge, just as he did in the Seatonian poems: and the extent of that knowledge is considerable. The poem is in some ways a frenzied Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind: just as Wordsworth's Prelude gives us a clear picture of Wordsworth's mind, techniques, and attitudes, so does Smart's. If anything, Smart's is both more cryptic and wider ranging. It comments on innumerable animals and plants, the scientific controversies of the time (e.g. B1: 198-208), sounds and their production (B1: 224-259), God's virtues (almost everywhere), Smart's cat Jeoffrey (B2: 697-771), and Smart's prophecies (C: 59-130). The list could go on, but it should be clear that everything was a fit subject for this poet. All things were involved in giving praise to God, and the giving of praise was Smart's chosen role.

The Hebrew techniques aside, perhaps the most interesting structural aspect of Jubilate Agno is its complex, associative structure. After Fragment A, all that was demanded structurally was the alternation of Let and For verses. From that point on the poem grew organically. We can be fairly sure that Smart did not decide to introduce specific things in a specific order, but the writing of each verse gave rise to the next one, and would sometimes initiate other lines much farther on in the poem. Such is the case with lines B1: 30 and B1: 142 above. The key to this is a sort of free association on certain themes which were dominant in Smart's mind. Once the association was made, it was often obscured, as Smart played cleverly upon words.

Smart sets up one such association at B2: 384, where he writes "For to worship naked in the Rain is the bravest thing for the refreshing and purifying the body." He picks up the theme again at C: 97 and

begins a long, complex association with:

Let Geshem (which is Rain)
rejoice with Kneeholm.
Blessed be the name of the
Lord Jesus for Rain and
his family and for the
plenteous rain this day.
April 9th 1761. N.S.

For I prophecy that the
Reformation will make
way in France when Moad
is made meek by being
well drubbed by the
English.

He sets up the association of rain and knees here, by working the words into the two names he is using, and adds to that the association of religion which he has already made. The association of prayer and knees is a ready one, and Smart works around to it cleverly. He continues on the subject of the Reformation, detailing its spread throughout Europe, and then in C: 105, writes "For Italy is one of the legs." From legs to knees is a short jump, which Smart makes, and writes in C: 107-113:

For I prophecy that men will learn the use of their
knees.
For everything that can be done in that posture
(upon the knees) is better so done than otherwise.
For I prophecy that they will understand the blessing
and virtue of the rain.
For rain is exceedingly good for the human body.
For it is good therefore to have flat roofs to the
houses, as of old.
For it is good to let the rain come upon the naked
body with purity and refreshment.

All of this leads us back to B2: 384, and the pattern can be seen to spring from the association of Geshem and Kneeholm. The intrusion of the line "For it is good therefore to have flat roofs . . ." seems to break the pattern, but appearances are deceptive. This too, is part of the pattern, for at C: 133-134 and C: 136, we find:

For it is not good to wear anything upon the head.

For a man should put no obstacle between his head
and the blessing of Almighty God.

. . .
For the ceiling of the house is an obstacle and
therefore we pray on the house-top.

If Smart wishes to pray on the house-top, it is far better for him to have flat roofs, lest he fall off. There is a method to his madness, if the wind is right. All of these things tie together, and other things are introduced, such as the horn on man's forehead which Smart wants returned.

Associative patterns explain the links between many more of the verses than has been assumed. The ones that seem incomprehensible could probably be explained if we could follow Smart's associations. These remain inexplicable not because of Smart's madness but for a variety of other reasons. Three verses will give us an idea of the type of work that can be done. In Fragment B1 we find the lines:

Let Theophilus rejoice with
the Folio, who hath teeth,
like the teeth of a saw.

For MATTER is the dust
of the Earth, every atom
of which is the life.

Let Bartimaeus rejoice with
the Quaviver -- God be gra-
cious to the eyes of him,
who prayeth for the blind.

For MOTION is as the
quantity of life direct,
and that which hath not
motion is resistance.

Let CHRISTOPHER who is
Simon of Cyrene, rejoice
with the Rough -- God be gra-
cious to the CAM & to
DAVID CAM & his seed for ever.

For Resistance is not
of God, but he -- hath
built his works upon it.
(B1: 160-162)

There are first the clear associations in the For verses, as Smart links matter to life, life to motion, motion to resistance, and resistance to God. Yet in conjunction with the Let verses there is more to be extracted. The first two pairs of verses are joined themselves by

a sort of verbal gymnastics. In the first, the teeth of a saw, which give saw-dust, can be seen to give rise to the dust of the For section of the verse. In the second, the Quaviver probably reminded Smart of quiver and quaver, both of which are motions, and vive, which is life. Both motion and life appear in the corresponding For verse. That which is not motion is resistance, and Smart would probably think of adversity or his troubles, since Smart must constantly resist the adversity of his own confinement. He should then refer to himself, which is exactly what he does. Christopher, used in line 162, is not a name linked to St. Simon of Cyrene in the Bible. St. Simon was, however, compelled to carry a cross after Christ, and the name is not altogether inappropriate.¹⁴ Christopher, though, is also Smart. Smart is equating himself with Simon, since he too has his cross to bear. Elsewhere in Jubilate Agno Smart complains that he is under the same accusation as his Saviour. In the rest of the line here, Smart asks God to be gracious to him in his troubles. He does this by creating another name for himself, probably his best pseudonymn -- David Cam, writ large. Smart was a student at Cambridge, which is on the River Cam. We know that he identified himself with David, and thus Smart is David Cam, or David of Cam. The title is an apt one. If eighteenth century Cambridge had a psalmist, Smart is as good a contender as anyone for the honour. The last For verse ties all of this together. Just as the Christopher of the Let verse had to struggle with his oppressors, so does Smart. In Bedlam, Smart will resist and perform God's works. God does not have to resist, but Smart does, and God will reward Smart for his efforts.

The series of associations could go on, since the next verse takes the pattern one step farther. It reads:

Let Timaeus rejoice with the
Ling -- God keep the English
Sailors clear of French
Bribery.

For the Centripetal and
Centrifugal forces are
GOD SUSTAINING and
DIRECTING.

(B1: 164)

From the Cam, Smart moves to sailors, from resistance to turning down bribes, and then to forces that hold in (loyalty to resist bribes) and force out (the offer of a bribe). This is also tied to the series of scientific notions which link together the For verses. The For verse can also be seen as another affirmation of Berkeley's hypothesis that God is in all things, constantly supporting them and everywhere manifesting himself. Bond also notes an affinity with Denham's Astro-Theology and Physico-Theology, which were both extremely influential works in Smart's time.¹⁵

Not all of the associations are as complex as these, or as tenuous, and many are quite direct, such as:

Let Elkanah rejoice with
Cymindis the Lord illum-
inate us against the
powers of darkness.

For the officers of the
peace are at variance
with me, and the watch-
man smites me with his
staff.

(B1: 90)

Here, the Cymindis in the Let verse leads Smart to think of darkness, since it is the night-hawk, or night jar.¹⁶ On the subject of night and protection against dark powers, Smart naturally thinks of the watchman, whose treatment of him has been cruel. The watchman here is equated with the powers of darkness, a clever means of indicating for whom they are really working. A corollary to this verse is:

Let Andrew rejoice with the
Whale, who is arrayd in
beauteous blue and is a

For they work me with
their harping irons, which
is a barbarous instrument,

combination of bulk and
activity.

because I am more unguard-
ed than others.

(B1: 124)

Whales bring to mind harpoons (harping-irons), which again recalls the harsh treatment Smart received while he was confined. We could go on with similar examples, but enough has been said to show that much of what has been considered mad, even in Bond's more logical construction of the text, has been written with a certain amount of reason, and often great cleverness. If the entire poem was available, it is likely that it could all be linked together, and that it could be shown that it grew out of itself organically, as one thing associated itself with another in the mind of the creating poet. The technique might not always be what we have called free association, but it combines a certain amount of verbal gymnastics with erudition and personal references. If the reader has "true critical sagacity" -- and only Smart knew what that really meant -- he could work out the meaning of the entire poem. The reward would probably justify the effort.

Smart's experiments with technique do not end with the Hebrew techniques described above and the associative patterning. Even in the last example cited above, Smart has added his own, meaningful pattern of alliteration. As we have seen before, alliteration is used as more than adornment of the lines. It is often the key to their meaning, or to the particular points Smart wishes to make. Examples of this sort have already been seen in the Seatonian poems. In the last example above, Smart uses an alliteration of b's in the Let verse to describe the whale. In the For verse, he identifies himself with the whale, since he is worked with the same barbarous instrument as the whale is. There is probably a certain solace here for Smart as well, since the

whale was a combination of "bulk and activity," and Smart, extremely conscious of his small size,¹⁷ would appreciate the fact that even the great whale could be "unguarded" against his tormentors. The intricacy does not even end here, for the "barbarous" used in describing the harpoon is a continuation of the alliteration of the b's used in describing the whale, another link joining the Let and For sections of the verse. The word "unguarded" is also used in a double sense in the line, in one sense to protect against one's tormentors, and in another when Smart uses it to tell us that he is not always in control of himself.

Alliterations need not be particularly meaningful, though.

Jubilate Agno abounds with lines like:

Let James rejoice with the Skuttle-Fish, who foils
his foe by the effusion of his ink.

Let John rejoice with Nautilus who spreads his sail
and plies his oar, and the Lord is his pilot.
(B1: 125-6)

Here alliteration and assonance are used cleverly, but with no intention of providing the meaning of the line. They serve to enhance it, which in most circumstances is quite enough.

The basic structure of the poem, the pairs of verses, lends itself well to parallelism. In addition to the more obvious parallels to be found in corresponding Let and For verses, Smart also uses the device to advantage within single lines, such as: "For the bite of an Adder is cured by its grease & the malice of my enemies by their stupidity" (B1: 118). Bond points out the similarity between this and Smart's epigram "On a Malignant Dull Poet,"¹⁸ where Smart wrote:

When the viper its venom has spit, it is said,
That its fat heals the wound which its poison
has made;

Thus it fares with the blockhead who ventures
 to write;
 His dullness an antidote proves to his spite.
 (I: 27)

The most striking point here is the conciseness of the image in Jubilate Agno, which loses none of the effectiveness of the longer, earlier piece. The line is unadorned in Jubilate Agno, as in the best of Hebrew poetry, and as a result is a much tighter, wittier barb. The removal of the connective Thus also makes the coupling of Smart's enemies and the Adder much closer. The earlier epigram may be written in two parallel halves, but the later verse has two parallel, overlapping concepts.

The particular type of sound patterning we encountered in the Seatonian poems is also continued in parts of Jubilate Agno, in such verses as: "For the Glory of God is always in the East, but cannot be seen for the Cloud of the Crucifixion" (B1: 167). Smart has made certain that we cannot miss the pattern by capitalizing the key words. The central East-seen assonance is flanked by the alliteration of hard g's at the beginning of the line, and hard c's at the end, each alliterative phrase beginning with a for the.

As the poem continues, the use of these devices diminishes although they still occasionally appear. It would seem that Smart had ceased to be concerned with the poetry as art and was beginning to use Jubilate Agno as a notebook and calendar. Fragment D bears out this theory, as Smart seems to be jotting down the names of flowers, herbs, and animals so that he will have them for future reference. In most of that fragment, a thing is briefly described after being named, as in "Let Codrington, house of Codrington rejoice with Thelyphonon an herb whose root kills scorpions" (D: 149). This may have been done

because Smart had already begun the Psalms and their accompanying Hymns, and these dominated his interest. He writes in Fragment D:

Let Fig, house of Fig rejoice with Fleawort.
 The Lord magnify the idea of Smart singing
 hymns on this day in the eyes of the whole
 University of Cambridge. Nov. 5th. 1762. N.S.
 (D: 148)

As Stead points out:

This line is the only place in which Smart's name occurs in the whole MS. and it is characteristic that he should picture himself singing hymns before his university. Probably he was thinking¹⁹ of and had begun work on his metrical Psalms and the accompanying Hymns.

It is likely that it was well before Section D that Smart realized that Jubilate Agno was not the work he had originally intended it to be, but was rather a preparation for something greater. The notebook aspect of Fragment D most clearly illustrates this preparatory aspect, but there are also periods earlier in the poem where Smart is not making notes, but chrystallizing attitudes. In these sections, Smart is working out and articulating many of his theories, as in the verses on his method of composition and the relations of words. He also toys with many of the themes which will appear in the Song. In a section of Fragment B1 he renounces his birthright, and affirms his belief in the infidelity of his wife.²⁰ The theme of domestic peace is used many times in Jubilate Agno, and later appears in the Song. In Jubilate Agno he writes:

Let Talmai rejoice with Al-
 cedo, who makes a cradle
 for its young, which is
 rock'd by the winds.

For they have separated
 me and my bosom, where-
 as the right comes by
 setting us together.

(B1: 59)

The Alcedo, which is a halcyon appears in stanza LI of the Song, where one of the themes is domestic bliss and tranquility. In B1: 75-76 Smart blesses his children and prays for them, and in B1: 122 he writes:

Let Cherub rejoice with the	For I bless God for every
Cherub who is a bird and a	feather from the wren in
blessed Angel.	the sedge to the CHERUBS
	& their MATES.

and asks for domestic peace for all, from the Angels to the lowliest creatures.

More important in terms of anticipation of the Song is the attitude to music Smart shows in Jubilate Agno. In Song to David the purpose of everything is to give adoration, and the best way to do that is by singing. In Jubilate Agno Smart writes:

Let Jubal rejoice with	For I pray the Lord Jesus
Caecilia, the woman	to translate my
and the slow-worm praise	MAGNIFICAT into verse
the name of the Lord.	and represent it.
	(B1: 43)

Not only is Smart expressing his intention to write the great song of praise, his Magnificat, but he is playing with words in his customary way. Caecelia is the name of a lizard, as well as being St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music. This associates with Jubal, who was the inventor of music.²¹ Both Jubilate Agno and the Song were meant to be sung. At another point in Jubilate Agno Smart says: "Let Ehud rejoice with Onocrotalus, whose braying is for the glory of God, because he makes the best musicke in his power" (B1: 42). Sophia Blaydes points out that

Two ideas are presented. First, Smart repeats a favorite concept that all things are created by God and praise Him by their peculiar

characteristics. Here we find a waterfowl whose particular noise lends itself to the praise of God, because it is the best music in his power. The second idea then, is that all music is an extension of any being's praise of God, or that any praise of God is musical.²²

Smart carries the music-praise theme farther in Jubilate Agno, and relates it to the whole of creation:

For the VOICE is from the body and the spirit --
and is a body and a spirit.

For the prayers of good men are therefore visible
to second sighted persons.

.

For GOD the father Almighty plays upon the HARP of
stupendous magnitude and melody.

For innumerable Angels fly out at every touch and
his tune is a work of creation.

For at that time malignity ceases and the devils
themselves are at peace.

For this time is perceptible to man by a remarkable
stillness and serenity.

For the Aeolian harp is improvable into regularity.
(B1: 239-250)

Creation is, then, a musical act, and music brings peace to all, even the devils. It is Smart's conception of music that defines the Song, for that hymn of "magnitude and melody" seems to have brought peace to even the devils troubling Smart. The Song is demonstrating the very principles it is expressing; it is a musical prayer of adoration which is about music, prayer, and adoration.²³ Smart's conception of music is also basic to his whole conception of nature, since it is part of the union we have already described. The song is a body and spirit -- like everything else -- and therefore the core of everything is spiritual. This spiritual core is defined by music, since as we see above it was

created with music. Thus Orpheus, who brings peace when he plays, is coupled with David, the other great singer. The two are joined with all of nature and with God, since nature was created by God with music which brought peace. As Smart says of Orpheus later in Jubilate Agno:

For the story of Orpheus is the truth.
 For there was such a person a cunning player upon the harp.
 For he was a believer in the true God and assisted in the spirit.
 For he played upon the harp in the spirit by breathing upon the strings.
 For this will affect every thing that is sustained by the spirit, even every thing in nature.
 (C: 52-56)

In Jubilate Agno we also find another technique Smart used in the Song and the Psalms: the juxtaposition of Old and New Testament phrases to bolster each other. The Hebraic tradition is strengthened with a Christian attitude in such pairings as:

For Solomon said vanity of vanities vanity of vanities
 all is vanity.
 For Jesus says verity of verities verity of verities
 all is verity.
 (B1: 287-288)

The most frequent, and probably least skilful use of this technique will be found in the Psalms, where Smart intrudes evangelical material to swell out the Psalms, and to replace any Old Testament material which could not be seen as distinctively Christian.

The twelve virtues that appear in the Song (lines 19-21) appear in the same order twice in Fragment B2 of Jubilate Agno, once in relation to the directions of the compass (B2: 355-356), and once in relation to Smart's contemporaries and the sons of Jacob (B2: 603-

615). In addition to this naming of the virtues in Jubilate Agno in the same order as they appear in the Song, these sections come close to the point at which Smart first articulated his theory of composition. This could lead us to believe that he was already working on the Song, or came back to Jubilate Agno as source material when working on the Song.

Even though the Song is acknowledged as the better work, not everything taken over from Jubilate Agno and used in the greater work was improved. In B1: 129 Smart mentions the swordfish, which reappears as Xiphias in the Song:

Let Thomas rejoice with the
Sword-Fish, whose aim is
perpetual & strength in-
superable.

For I have the blessing
of God in the three
POINTS of manhood, of
the pen, of the sword,
& of chivalry.

Strong through the turbulent profound
Shoots xiphias to his aim.
(I, 365)

The sound patterning in the lines from the Song is excellent, but to judge it as better than the syllabic play in the phrase "whose aim is perpetual & strength insuperable" is at best questionable. Bond refers to the line from Jubilate Agno as "pedestrian"²⁴ and Blaydes says that it "reveals the artistry inherent in the later poem,"²⁵ but the case is not as clear as either would have us believe. In addition to these similarities between the Song and Jubilate Agno there is also reference made to almost all of the themes of the Song in Jubilate Agno. These include prayer and gratitude, Hebrew, music, David, the seasons, applause, puns and unique words.

In passing, we should make reference to Smart's remarks about

his cat Jeoffrey (B2: 697-770). Here Smart, with that romantic appreciation of the natural which could number the streaks of a tulip, records the habits of his cat, and comments on the power and spirituality of cats in general. The passage is an unforgettable one, and is a section of Jubilate Agno which even safe anthologizers will include in their collections. Smart is in good poetic company with his treatment of cats, in league with such figures as T.S. Eliot who shows his fascination in Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats, Archibald Lampman who devoted a column to the same subject in the Toronto Globe²⁶ and Baudelaire.

Yet in some terms Jubilate Agno was still a failure. Smart's primary intention that it be the opening move in a reformation of the Anglican liturgy was quite definitely laid aside before the poem was completed. Yet as an experiment, it cannot be faulted. We judge the effectiveness of an experiment by its results, and the result of this experiment was the Song. That Smart ceased to be impersonal after Fragment A only means that the poem ceased to be impersonal. It does not indicate that the poem was a total failure. It is Smart's Prelude: not only does it show the growth of the poet's mind, it exemplifies it. It was through Jubilate Agno that Smart moved to a more romantic position. He ceased to be concerned with obscuring himself, but appeared from behind the scenery to comment openly. He no longer allowed his form to dictate to him, but let the poem evolve out of itself. By the time Jubilate Agno was completed, Smart no longer had to force an image onto the thing described. Like the jasper which bears the master's stamp in the Song, things declare their inherent qualities with spontaneity and conciseness after Jubilate Agno. Smart may have been sent

to a sea of affliction to search for pearls, but he returned with a polished diamond: and he polished it on the folio pages of Jubilate Agno.

Not all of the preparatory work was done in Jubilate Agno. At the same time that he was adding to that poem, he was also working on his Translation of the Psalms and his Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England. Both of these works were published in 1765, to which volume A Song to David was added.

Smart was not alone in presenting the Psalms in a Christian context, as Moira Dearnley points out in her excellent historical consideration of Smart's work.²⁷ Many other eighteenth century authors set themselves the same task, including Reverend Daniel Burgess (1714), Rev. Dr. Isaac Watts (1719), Simon Browne (1720), Thomas Coney (1722), Richard Daniel (1722), and James Fench (1764). All of these authors put out violent recastings of some or all of the Psalms, turning them into Christian evangelical works. Smart remains within that tradition for the most part, as his version introduces much evangelical expansion. The most striking feature of Smart's revision, however, is not the number of references to Christ but the change in the character of David, and the manner in which Smart has reformed his Biblical alter-ego.

Nowhere in the Psalms does Smart show the hatred David had for his enemies. For a man who was occasionally so violent that he had to be confined, Smart shows a curious reluctance to accept violence. In fact, Smart seems inclined to remake David in Smart's image of an idealized Smart. Where David is in tune with Old Testament vengeance, and writes in Psalm 38:8: "Let destruction come upon him at unawares; and let his net that he hath hid catch himself; into that very destruc-

tion let him fall," Smart has David show Christian charity. In Smart's version, the same verse reads:

Let no violent perdition
Come upon them unaware;
Let them scape by true contrition
Every terror, every snare.
(II, 466)

The idea is the same as that expressed in the Song, where Smart writes: "The slander and its bearer spurn,/ And propogating praise sojourn" and "The generous soul her saviour aids,/ But peevish obloquy degrades" (I, 359, stanzas XLVII and L). Perhaps the most violent of such changes is in Psalm LIV. In the Old Testament version, David prays for strength against his enemies. Smart's version is a narration of Christ's agony in the garden.

Although we may find many parallels between the Psalms and the Song and Jubilate Agno, the Psalms for the most part are long-winded in comparison to the brevity and pithiness of the other works. The place of the Psalms in Smart's development is significant. When they were published in the same volume as the Song and the Hymns and Spiritual Songs, they were first and the Song last. As such, they "exhibit a steadily increasing power in Smart's technical control of his medium, as well as a developing structure of religious thought which becomes more complicated and at the same time more clearly defined."²⁸

Although the practice Smart adopted of writing a stanza for every verse of the original Psalm necessitated a good deal of expansion, he is seldom guilty of mere padding. His methods of expansion were often in keeping with his Hebrew models, as in the case of Psalms 98:7. The original verse is "Confounded be all they that serve graven images,

vowels in the line, stand out much more clearly. We become more aware of the difference in fall and fell, and thus the change from present to past, from incomplete to completed action, becomes more definite. This is exactly what Smart wants us to believe will happen to all idolators.

Those expansions and changes which were not essentially evangelical are quite consistently the best poetry in Smart's version of the Psalms. He deals with his favorite subjects in those cases, such as the glory of God's nature and the theme of music, as the following examples:

Each ridge and furrow of the field
Is water'd by the dew of God;
The blessed rains their nurture yield
In every soften'd clod.

. . .

The thriving sheep the folds shall
throng,
Rank ears the golden valley grace;
To call forth laughter and a song
From nature's voice and face.

(II, 534-5)

Thou waterest the ridges
thereof abundantly: thou
settlest the fumous thereof:
thou makest it soft with
showers: thou blessest the
springing thereof.

. . .

The pastures are clothed
with flocks; the valleys
also are covered over with
corn; they shout of joy,
they also sing.

(Psalms 65:9,13)

Smart's love of music is revealed in two other examples, which echo the treatment of music in Jubilate Agno and look forward to the Song.

Ye jocund harpers, kneel,
As you the impulse feel,
And to the Lord your praise intend;
Ye holy psalmists join
In harmony divine,
And all your grateful voice blend.

(II, 628)

Sing unto the LORD with
the harp; with the harp,
and the voice of a
psalm.

(Psalms 98:5)

Praise with the harp the prince of
grace,
Let lutes accord to him that
sings,
Adopt the mellow sounding bass
With ten melodious strings.

(II, 457)

Praise the LORD with harp:
sing unto him with the
psaltery and an instru-
ment of ten strings.

(Psalms 33:2)

In verses like these we can see a developing poet: one who has taken as his own certain subjects and themes and treats them in a characteristic fashion. Yet much of the poetry in the Psalms was neither successful nor typical of Smart. We need look no farther than Psalm XXIII to see how badly Smart could handle good material.

The shepherd Christ from heav'n
arriv'd,
My flesh and spirit feeds;
I shall not therefore be depriv'd
Of all my nature needs.
As slop'd against glist'ning beam
The velvet verdure swells,
He keeps, and leads me by the
stream
Where consolation dwells.

. . .

Yea; tho' I walk through death's
gloomy vale,
The dread I shall disdain;
For thou art with me, lest I fail,
To check me and sustain.
(II, 435)

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down
in green pastures: he
leadeth me beside the still
waters.

. . .

Yea, though I walk through
the valley of the shadow of
death, I will fear no evil:
for thou art with me; thy
rod and thy staff, they
comfort me.
(Psalms 23:1,2,4)

Velvet verdure indeed! The verse here borders on doggerel. Fortunately, it is not always so, for in many of the Psalms one hears the distinctive voice of a poet who is achieving mastery of both himself and his techniques. In "Psalm XXVII" the voice is perhaps clearest, where Smart writes:

The Lord with Adoration hail,
For he has made my pray'r prevail,
As I from wrath abstain;
And my humility succeeds,
And that request which pity pleads,
I from his mercy gain.
(II, 447)

This is clearly the same poet who wrote the Song. In fact, one can

find in the Psalms all of the devices, techniques, and themes of the Song, albeit scattered rather thinly. Several of the Psalms are written in the same metre and stanza form as the Song. The difference is that he handled all of these things better in the later poem. Before we come to that, however, there are still the Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England, published at the same time as the Psalms, and poetically far better.

Brittain points out that Smart followed stylistic lines in the Hymns which were already developed in the Psalms. He adds that "material definitely Hebraic in origin is frequently poured into a sort of Horatian mold."³¹ This practice has been discussed at length already, in relation to Smart's theory of composition, by which a poem which is classical in form may still be romantic in its content and internal structure. Although most of the devices used in the Hymns have been used by Smart before, he shows new skill in at least the area of unity. The arrangement of the Hymns is cyclical -- each hymn leads to the next not only chronologically, for they follow the calendar church year, but also internally. Each hymn is linked to the next by a verbal arrangement. Thus, the last stanza in "Hymn XX: St. Peter" is:

There Jehovah's dove may perch
 On the topmast as she swims --
 Ev'ry vessel is a church
 Meet for praise, for pray'r, and hymns.
 (II, 830)

The next hymn, "Hymn XXI: St. James," picks up the sea images of the previous hymn and begins "Sure a seaman's lot is bless'd,/ Gen'rous, faithful, frank, and brave" (II, 831). This unifying technique is

carried through the whole series of hymns, the last hymn ending with "Till all nations have concurr'd/ In the worship of the WORD" (II, 851), and the first beginning with:

WORD of endless adoration,
 Christ, I to thy call appear;
 On my knees in meek prostration
 To begin a better year.
 (II, 778)

As we have seen in Smart's work before, the word mirrors the act. The poems are cyclical just as the year is, and Smart's adoration turns back on itself and continues endlessly. This close unity is maintained within each of the poems as well. Brittain describes the structure of the first hymn as a "very formal argument" where the first two themes are introduced in stanzas one to three, the first theme developed in stanza four and the second in stanzas five and six. The two are interwoven in stanzas seven and eight, out of which comes the third theme, which takes up the last stanzas.³² It is this sort of very close structuring that we find in the Song, where the plan is perhaps more elaborate and the themes more numerous.

In the Hymns, there is also a system of cross-referencing which is used as a sort of shorthand. Images and references in one hymn or stanza cannot be fully understood without recourse to other hymns or stanzas. In the last stanza of "Hymn IX: The Annunciation," for example, we find the lines "By men from lust repriev'd/ As females best conceived" (II, 804). Brittain posits that the printer has reversed the lines³³, but even in their proper order the lines are difficult to understand if taken alone. He points out that they refer to the previous stanza, to Hannah, Sarah, and Elizabeth, who all gave birth late in

life to great men. They were the mothers of Samuel, Isaac and John the Baptist. Smart is dealing with several themes here, including the miraculous conception, purity and mystery, the strange course of nature, and the expression of praise in the songs of men and angels.³⁴

What have emerged throughout Smart's development as his favorite themes appear in the Hymns just as they did in the Psalms and Jubilate Agno. In "Hymn IX: The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin," Smart praises God in terms of music in the stanza:

Praise him, seraphic tone
Of instruments unknown,
High strands on golden wire,
Worked by ethereal fire;
Blowing on unceasing chords,
'King of kings and lord of lords.'
(II, 803)

This stanza is close to the treatment of music in Jubilate Agno, where God plays upon the harp with fire. This stanza also follows the directions Smart set out in Jubilate Agno, at B2: 584-599, for the proper rhyming words to use for certain musical instruments.³⁵

In "Hymn XIV: The Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ," Smart again states his recognition of God's participation in all things when he writes:

For not a particle of space
Where'er his glory beam'd,
With all the modes of site and place,
But were the better for his grace,
And up to higher lot redeem'd.
(II, 816)

In the same poem, he also shows his awareness of the sanctity of all of God's creatures, ". . . all that dwell in depth of wave,/ And ocean -- every drop." All of the favorite themes are here, but they are handled

with more skill than ever before. The images of even the earlier poems reappear: David as a symbolic figure, the seraphic music, the pillars of the Lord, and the rare gems and animals.

In "Hymn XXXII: The Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," Smart is at his lyrical best. He writes:

Spinks and ouzles sing sublimely,
 'Ve too have a Saviour born.'
 Whiter blossoms burst untimely
 On the blest Mosaic thorn.
 (II, 847)

With purity, simplicity, and conciseness Smart has set up a scene where not only all of nature rejoices at the birth of its saviour, but he has linked the Christian and the Hebraic traditions in his reference to the Mosaic thorn. The "whiter blossoms" to which Smart refers in these lines are the Glastonbury thorn, which bloomed at Christmas, supposedly springing from the staff of Joseph of Arimathea. In the Hebrew tradition, Aaron's rod sprang into bloom signifying the choice of the Levites as priests in Numbers 17. This reference then not only transcends time, but also points to the role of Jesus at his birth.³⁶ Smart is using words here in their fullest connotative sense, and it is perhaps this that the whole of Jubilate Agno had been leading to. That poem is, after all, an attempt to attach to any given word as many meanings and associations as possible.

In the Hymns we even find a description, albeit cryptic, of the Song. The Song is Smart's epiphany, and it is fitting that it should be described in "Hymn II: Epiphany."

Muse, through Christ the Word, inventive
 Of the praise so greatly due:
 Heavenly gratitude, retentive

CHAPTER IV

THE SONG

A Song to David is the culmination of Smart's poetic development. In this one poem, he has synthesized all of the techniques practised from the Seatonian poems to the Hymns. Here he set out his beliefs and made his dedication with honesty, power, and great artistry. Like the Hebrew poetry Smart tried to emulate, the poem is both universal and personal, formal and moving, structured and free. Written by a supposed madman in an age of reason, it was sane where it was thought to be mad, brilliant where it was called "dun obscure."

Many Smart scholars have presented exegeses of the poem, notable among them J.R. Tutin, J.B. Broadbent, Robert Brittain, Christopher Devlin, and Sophia Blaydes.¹ In fact, so much has been written that it would be futile to attempt to present even a summary of all the material, particularly since it does not relate directly to our subject here. We shall rather attempt to confine our discussion to the techniques of the poem, with some reference to the themes. We shall also attempt to show how the Song is the summary of all of Smart's previous work, and the expression of the ultimate stage in his development.

Let us first say simply that the Song is what it is because it is a work of the imagination. Smart's mind worked, consciously or not, on all of the themes of the Song long and deeply. He put these thoughts into an artistic form which could be called a supreme work of reason, but there had to come a point when reason could not continue alone and imagination was in the ascendant. In this elaborate poem, Smart

communicates the intoxication of his senses, and the intoxication of his soul with thoughts of its Creator. This is the basis of the profound feeling of unity that joins all of nature, all of the universe, and thus all of the poem. The changing images flash before the reader, evoking not a planned picture of nature but "the prodigality of Nature as no logical sequence could."²

Examination of Jubilate Agno has already explained many of Smart's techniques. In fact, we have seen that Smart himself, metaphorically, cryptically, or allegorically, explained most things about his poetry. In Reason and Imagination, published shortly after the first edition of the Song in 1763, Smart sets out a position that helps to explain the paradoxical Song. In the fable Reason and Imagination, the character Imagination woos Reason, coming to Reason's cottage in the forest. She (Imagination) says that his (Reason's) studies will lead to madness if they are not tempered with something else. Whether this is a conscious rationalization by Smart concerning his own madness or not, he writes:

The doctors soon will find a flaw
And lock you up in chains and straw.
(I, 80)

Reason appears to be the same character as his counterpart in Blake's Jerusalem, where Reason consumes himself when he has exhausted the empirical data of the finite universe. Imagination, on the other hand, can always create new forms, and need never run out of material. Nor can she be faulted in her knowledge of it, like the Berkeleian philosopher, because perceiving a thing is perceiving it correctly. The two are synonymous. In Blake's Jerusalem, Imagination looks down from the

clouds at the tormented man of reason. In Smart's poem, Reason is invited:

To those bright plains where crowd in swarms
 The spirits of fantastic forms;
 To planets populous with elves;
 To natures still above themselves.
 I'll bring you to the pearly cars
 By dragons drawn above the stars,
 To colours of Arabian glow
 And to the heart-dilating show
 Of paintings which surmount the life.
 (I, 81)

Reason refuses wedlock with Imagination, but accepts a role as ally, "To act conjointly in the war/ On dullness, whom we both abhor" (I, 81). As tokens of their alliance, Reason takes Imagination's "wand and winged steed" and gives her his compass and rule.

This fable sheds light on the composition of the Song. In the Song, reason is the correspondent and ally of imagination, and it is reason that gives the poem its form and elaborate structure. Yet Imagination, while operating within the confines of Reason's forest, is not wedded to him. It can still sweep along on the wings of emotion and creativity, and it is thus that the poem seems to spring fresh and uncontrolled from Smart's mind. Yet Smart says at the end of Reason and Imagination that God transcends both faculties, and it is to God rather than to reason and imagination that we should look for guidance. This is not really an escape from answering the question, but is the answer itself. To see the dilemma solved, we need only look at the nature of Smart's God. He is not primarily a God of reason, he is not a law-giver, and neither is he a God of vengeance. He is, rather, the God of creation, and it is God's creation that is consistently praised by Smart. A Song to David then emerges as a poem that is a product of reason and

imagination but written in praise of a creative God who is not bound by the rules of mere reason. Smart's God is not a lawyer or a watchmaker; He is a poet.

The poem written in praise of this God consists of eighty-six stanzas with the rhyme scheme aabccb, the same stanza form as that used in Chaucer's Sir Thopas. The form, the romance-six, is mentioned by Calvin Daniel Yost, Jr., as being a popular one in Smart's period.³ The aa and cc lines are written in iambic tetrameter and the b lines in iambic trimeter, with occasional trochees, dactyls, and anapaests used for emphasis. The form, because of its easy movement and regularity, lends itself to musical accompaniment, which was very important to Smart. He believed that music plays a universal role, a role similar to that described by Herbert M. Schueller:

Musical harmony was thought to be nothing less than a counterpart to universal harmony as reflected in the human soul, which through fervor and ecstasy achieves its own ennoblement.⁴

Smart stated this theory cryptically in Jubilate Agno, and the best example of its application is to be found in the Song. The Song is, in fact, written with the complexity of a musical composition and is as mathematically precise. The overall structure is worked like the movements in a symphony and is given by Smart at the beginning of the poem. This structure can be summarized as:

Stanzas		No. of stanzas
I-III	Invocation	3
IV-XVII	Description of David's character -- twelve points of excellence	2x7
XVIII-XXVI	Description of subjects of which David sings.	3x3
XXVI-XXIX	The effects of his singing	3
XXX	Introduction of seven pillars	1
XXXI-XXXVII	The seven pillars of God defined	7

XXXVIII	Conclusion of first section	1
XXXIX	Introduction to second section	1
XL-XLVIII	Summary of biblical moral code	3x3
XLIX	Conclusion of moral section	1
L	Introduction of adoration theme	1
LI-LXXI	Adoration	3x7
LXXII-LXXXVI	Delights divine and earthly: sweetness, strength, beauty, preciousness, glory.	5x5

The stanzas, it will be noticed, are broken into groups of multiples of three and seven, with an occasional one. These are numbers which Smart approved in Jubilate Agno, where he wrote:

For there is a mystery in numbers.
 For One is perfect and good being at unity in himself . . .
 For every thing infinitely perfect is Three . . .
 For Seven is very good consisting of two compleat numbers . . .
 (C, 19-20, 22, 31)

Although we can divide the poem in this fashion, the divisions are imposed rather than real. To a reader, the divisions do not become immediately apparent. Smart's experiments with catalogues and strings of associations had prepared him for this. He had learned how to work with:

the climactic building up of a series of concepts which embody certain similarities; and his favorite use of such a method is found in the series which traces through the various kingdoms of life.⁶

The whole poem is this climactic building up, but as Brittain points out, this can most clearly be seen in the last sets of verses. There are five sets of three verses each at the end of A Song to David, dealing in turn with the sweetness of life and earth, and the greater spiritual sweetness of David; the second set with strength; the third with the beautiful; the fourth, the precious; and the fifth, the glorious, in which section comes the climax of the poem. Each of these

sections emphasizes the theme of "David's gratitude, his faith, his prayer, his pure heart, and his salvation through Christ,"⁷ all of which asserts the major theme of the poem. Of course, since there is an identification of Smart and David, all that deals with David applies to Smart. The situation becomes complex, since this is Smart's song to David, and thus also Smart's song to Smart, as well as being sung in adoration of God. We should remember, however, that the Smart who is identified with David is an idealized Smart, not the real one.

The devices Smart uses to achieve the unity, convey his message, and artistically justify the paradoxes in the poem deserve examination. We must preface the examination by recalling an observation made earlier in this chapter. We have seen that the poem is a paradoxical one. It is a study in conflict, and its conflicts can be reconciled only by our realizing that there came a point in Smart's mind when reason could go no farther, when logic was not of the essence. It was at this point that the Song took flight, at the point when imagination ranged free to combine, to construct, to enhance. It was then that Smart could resurrect stored moments and magical glimpses, and write golden words. It was then that he could landscape his own Arcady which neither knew nor needed a logic. Yet there was still a sort of logic, because the Arcady was constructed out of the mind of one man, and was designed as complexly as the man was. This alone, this romantic reconstruction on paper of the mind of man -- for it is that and nothing else -- reconciles everything that the Song is.

We know of Smart's religious feelings already. He has told us of them many times.⁸ We know of his erudition, which accounts for the classical influences Brittain so carefully pointed out. We know of his

philosophical position, so close to that of Berkeley, and of his use of Hebraic techniques. In the Song, though, there is another level of reference, which accounts for much of the poem; and this is the startlingly fresh view of a dynamic nature. Smart returns to his childhood visions of nature to achieve this, as in the previously examined poem "The Hop-Garden." He shared with Wordsworth the belief that:

There are in our existence spots of time,
That with distinct pre-eminence retain
A renovating virtue, whence, depressed
By false opinion and contentious thought,
Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,
In trivial occupations and the round
Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
Are nourished and invisibly repaired;
A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
That penetrates, enables us to mount,
When high, more high, and lifts us up when fallen.⁹

Smart's religion had performed this function for him, but now the natural world can do so also. At times we can directly trace images in the Song back to Smart's childhood, as in:

And, by the coasting reader spied,
The silverlings and crusions glide
For ADORATION gilt.
(I, 361)

The crusion is a type of carp which is yellow. Its colour prompts the use of the word "gilt" in the last line of the stanza. In Jubilate Agno, at B1: 168, we find the line "Let Mary rejoice with the Carp -- the ponds of Fairlawn and the garden bless for the master." It was at Fairlawn that Smart had spent his childhood, and he is recalling the fishponds there. As he writes in Jubilate Agno at B2: 171: "Let Elizabeth rejoice with the Crab -- it is good, at times, to go back." Again, in stanza XXIV of the Song, it is said that David sang of fish,

among other subjects. Smart writes:

The shoals upon the surface leap,
And love the glancing sun.
(I, 354)

These lines evoke an image of metallic, reflecting fish, like the "silver" fish in the earlier poem "The Hop-Garden." Grigson points out that more than a hundred lines of the Song refer directly to "sensations from his reading or from nature which Smart had recorded in other poems or in Jubilate Agno."¹⁰ But they have all been transformed now, as Smart comes back to them with greater understanding and conviction. He no longer has to hedge around them, to indulge in circumlocution as he did in the Seatonian poems. He states things openly and directly, because now he can have confidence in his perceptions and his manner of presentation. Consider this from "Psalm XXXI":

Be thou my bulwark to defend
Like some strong bastion's mole
(II, 452)

And the same material handled differently in the Song:

Strong is the lion -- like a coal
His eyeball -- like a bastion's mole
His chest against the foes.
(I, 365)

The whole universe was God's creation and God's expression, and Smart could and did delight in it all. He could see it all as God's, and could present it directly as such.

Where he presents the subjects of David's singing then, because they are all works of God, Smart is in his glory. He flashes from the heavens to the earth to the bottom of the sea. He writes:

He sung of God -- the mighty source
 Of all things -- the stupendous force
 On which all strength depends;
 From whose right arm, beneath whose eyes,
 All period, pow'r, and enterprise
 Commences, reigns, and ends.

.

The world -- the clustering spheres he made,
 The glorious light, the soothing shade,
 Dale, champaign, grove, and hill;
 The multitudinous abyss,
 Where secrecy remains in bliss,
 And wisdom hides her skill.

(I, 352-3)

Smart has managed to blend together a number of Old Testament passages. Almost everything in these stanzas finds its origin in the Psalms.¹¹ The technique is, as has been said before, Hebraic in origin. The poetry itself says much but extends itself into a giant mist-shadow when the additional meanings of all the references are added to it. This connotative technique, first seen in Smart in Jubilate Agno and the Hymns and Spiritual Songs, is used with tremendous effect here.

In the passage above we also see the use of listings or catalogues, which he used as early as the Seatonian poems and which remained one of his favorite devices. In the earlier works, they seemed somewhat random; they rarely became more than lists. Here, they are unified because there is the thread of the creator which runs through them all and of which we are constantly reminded. To unify the verses even more closely, Smart also uses a device he introduced in the Hymns, where one hymn is joined to the next by the use of similar images or phrases.

Perhaps the best example of this can be seen toward the end of the poem, where Smart shifts his view of the world every three stanzas after the conclusion of the "adoration" section. Smart first links the

last "adoration" verse with the first on sweetness by using arboreal imagery in both (stanzas LXXI-LXXII). The "sweetness" stanzas are then obviously held together by the repetition of the word sweet. He then refers to birds in both the last stanza on sweetness and the first on strength (LXXIV-LXV). In the next two "strength" stanzas, Smart uses sea imagery, which he carries into the first "beauteous" stanza (LXXVI-LXXVIII). The link between the "beauteous" and the "precious" stanzas is more subtle. In the last line of stanza LXXX Smart uses the phrase "dust to dust," signifying death, and then refers to widows at the beginning of the "precious" section. He may have been even thinking of his own death and of his wife as well, since thoughts of family ties and fidelity weighed heavily on his mind while he was in Bedlam, and appear as themes in both the Song and Jubilate Agno. He uses a similar device to link the first two "precious" stanzas, and in so doing makes a lovely metaphor as well. The last line of stanza LXXI refers to the "cerulean pearl" and the beginning of LXXXII is "Precious the penitential tear," which is an excellent comparison. Tears had probably been likened to pearls before, but it would be difficult to have found it done more cleverly.

When we come to the "glorious" stanzas, the last three of the poem, we are at a high pitch after the series of cascading images, and caught up in the chant-like repetitions. The words have taken on power, because every one of the key words has had significance added to it by virtue of the number of times it has been used. The word has been extended through the range of images it has been associated with until it engulfs all of creation. Then comes the most powerful of the repetitive series:

Glorious the sun in mid career;
 Glorious th'assembled fires appear
 Glorious the comet's train:
 Glorious the trumpet and alarm;
 Glorious th'almighty stretched out arm;
 Glorious th'enraptured main:

Glorious the northern lights astream;
 Glorious the song, when God's the theme;
 Glorious the thunder's roar:
 Glorious hosannah from the den;
 Glorious the catholic amen;
 Glorious the martyr's gore:
 (I, 367)

The images here are sensational: sun, fire, comets, trumpets, northern lights, alarms and thunder. Even the parting of the waters from Exodus appears in the last two lines of the first stanza. There are also at least three types of parallelism here. First there is the simple parallelism in line construction, where each thing called glorious is paralleled to all the others referred to. Then, there is the juxtaposition of Old and New Testament material, used particularly in the last lines of each stanza. In the first stanza, Moses at the Red Sea is invoked, and in the second Christ, who appears in the following stanza, is anticipated in the line "Glorious the martyr's gore." There is also a parallel created by the two types of reference used in the stanzas. One set refers to the glory of the wonders produced by God, with lightning, comets, sea-splitting and the like, and the other to the glory of songs of God, hosannahs and amens, whereby the two sets are equated. Certain matching lines in the stanzas are parallel as well, giving a possible fourth type of parallelism. The first lines of each stanza can be seen in this way, as can the corresponding third and fourth lines. Tenuous similarities can even be found in the second, fifth and sixth lines.

The parallelism and repetition used here are characteristic

Hebrew devices, as are other techniques in the Song. We can note the amplification of concepts, for example, as described by Lowth. Concepts are introduced simply, and then amplified and adorned. Smart follows this pattern at the beginning of the poem, where he sets out twelve of David's virtues, the same ones and in the same order as those found in Jubilate Agno at B2: 355-358 and B2: 603-615. These virtues are then taken one at a time in the twelve following stanzas. The same practice is followed in the last fifteen stanzas of the poem and can also be seen in several other places.

The sound patterning we encountered earlier is found with great frequency in the Song. In stanza XLVIII, the opening lines are:

Controul thine eye, salute success,
Honour the wiser, happier bless, . . .
(I, 359)

Here there is the assonance of the first syllables in each of the lines, the th's at the beginning of the second word in each line, the i sound in thine, eye, and wiser, and the run-on of eye to salute which is similar to the sound of wise. There is also the alliteration of the s's in the first line.

Even better is the pattern in stanza L, where we read:

Praise above all -- for praise prevails;
Heap up the measure, load the scales,
And good to goodness add:
The generous soul her saviour aids,
But peevish obloquy degrades;
The Lord is great and glad.
(I, 359)

In the first line, there is the alliteration of the pr's in the first, second last and last words. The same effect is seen in the more

symmetrical third line, where the same vowel is used in the first and last words, and the repetition of good pivots around the central to. The alliteration of g's is repeated in the last line, which forms a link additional to the rhyme scheme. Other excellent examples can be seen in stanzas VII (ll. 4-5), IX (l. 1), XII (5), XXVI (4-5), XXVIII (3-4), LII (the whole stanza), LXXV (1-2), and LXXXIII (4-5). Lesser examples can be found almost anywhere in the poem. As we have said before, a very strong argument can be made for Smart as the first poet to use patterned alliteration and assonance in English poetry.

There are many other devices which could be discussed, such as the use of the Hebrew mystical numbers three and seven throughout the poem. It is, however, sufficient to note that they are not only there, but consciously and cleverly used, as in the use of the seven pillars of God paralleling the seven days of creation, and in presenting man as a tri-partite being made of "mercy, soul, and sense." Yet what we have set out to show has been shown, and this study makes no claim to being exhaustive. From what we have seen, "The conclusion is inescapable that the Song reveals much of the force and ideas of the age, but it also reveals much of an author who is a precursor of the romanticism that was to flourish twenty years after his death."¹² Smart had completed his rise, which he seems to realize in the last stanza of the Song where he writes:

Glorious, -- more glorious, is the crown
Of Him that brought salvation down,
By meekness, called thy son:
Thou at stupendous truth believ'd; --
And now the matchless deed's atchiev'd,
DETERMINED, DARED, and DONE.
(I, 367)

The deed was done; Smart's Magnificat had been completed. He had run the gamut of literature, and come out the other end successful, but badly scarred. How badly scarred he was we shall see in the poetry that followed A Song to David.

CHAPTER V

THE DESCENT AND END

After the rise, and after the peak, comes the fall. Much of the detail of that fall can be omitted, for there are only a few beautiful ruins after the Song. Much of the poetry that followed was hack work, written to make money. Reason and Imagination, which has already been discussed, was published in 1763 with three uninspired pieces. In the same year, nine other poems of the same order were published, and in 1764 Hannah: An Oratorio appeared. This effort, together with Abimelech: An Oratorio (1768), was clearly a second-rate effort. Moira Dearnley assumes that Smart wrote the two for purely economic reasons.¹ This seems to be quite clearly the case with Abimelech, since Smart was imprisoned for debt shortly after its publication. Sherbo makes the same point concerning the Oratorios and several of the other poems which Smart published anonymously or pseudonymously both before and after Bedlam.²

In any event we find little in these works that Smart could have written with sincerity. In fact the Oratorios clearly contradict the religious attitude Smart had adopted in the Psalms, Hymns, and Song. In both Abimelech and Hannah, "devotional fervor is joined to the 'earthy' motive of sexual jealousy."³ In Hannah, some of Smart's true devotional passages transcend the other "earthy" material, but the juxtaposition of the two in Abimelech borders on the ridiculous. The few similarities between the Oratorios and Smart's other poetry are explored by Dearnley,⁴ but these similarities only show a poet

whose powers are clearly declining. In fact, we come to very little that can truly be called Smart's until we come to the end of his life. In the last three years of his life Smart put out The Parables of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Done Into Familiar Verse for the Use of Younger Minds (1768) and the Hymns for the Amusement of Children (1770).⁵

We have seen that in the Song Smart returned to images from childhood to recapture their freshness. He had also learned the value of the simple and direct statement as opposed to the ornate and circumlocutory style he had used in earlier poems. The Parables, all seventy-three of them with ten additional poems which Smart called "pertinent to our design," were written in 1768, and were dedicated to three-year-old Bonnell George Thornton.⁶ Smart wrote in his dedication:

There are sundry Instances of our Blessed SAVIOUR'S Fondness for Children, as a Man; and He has assured us, we can have no Part in Him without imitating their Innocence and Simplicity. This is so evident, that though you are scarce three Years of Age, you will soon be able to read and understand it: and in a Season will reflect, I trust, with Pleasure, that you have been the Patron of a well-intended work, almost as soon as you could go alone.

The dedication is charming, and promising, but unfortunately Smart was often to break his promise. Instead of making the biblical text more simple, he often makes it more complex by retaining the biblical vocabulary but complicating the syntax, as in "Parable VII." The original version read:

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast in the sea, and gathered of every kind; Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of the teeth.

(Matthew 13:47-50)

Smart altered this to read:

AGAIN -- the kingdom's like a draught
Of fishes in the ocean caught;
With which of every kind well stor'd,
The net they on the strand explor'd,
When some in vessels they collect,
And some they sever and reject.

So shall it happen in the end,
The Lord th'angelic host will send
To sever from amongst the just
Those, that attentive to their lust,
Were dead to Jesus preaching truth,
Now doom'd to wail and gnash the tooth.

(II, 858)

There can be no doubt of which is the more simple of the two. Smart's more complicated syntax could be justified if the verse was considerably improved, but it is difficult to find the artistry of the poet who wrote the Song here. Yet the Parables are like the Psalms, which, pedestrian for the most part, still contained some fine verse. In fact, we find a curious relationship here, which can be expressed as: the Parables are to the Hymns for the Amusement of Children as the Psalms are to the Hymns and Spiritual Songs. In both cases, Smart is better when he deals with his own material than when he adapts other material. When his choice of material is limited, he cannot combine his sensations and knowledge as he otherwise might; he cannot speak of things he has experienced. He is, after all, not a poet who deals with second-hand experience. He is a romantic singer, whose song is out of himself, out of the things he felt deeply and personally.

At the end of many of the parables, Smart wrote his own "Occasional Applications," and these, being personal, are generally better poetry than the parables themselves. In one such passage in "Parable II: The Kingdom of Heaven compared to a Grain of Mustard-Seed,"

Smart writes:

From contradiction, sin and strife,
He spreads abroad the tree of life;
And there his servants shall partake
The mansions, that the branches make;
There saints innumerable throng,
Assert their seat, and sing their song.

(II, 856)

This passage is simple and direct, as Smart had promised, and even brings up one of Smart's favorite themes. Another passage fits in this classification also. Both "Parable VI" and its "Application" deserve consideration:

AGAIN -- 'tis like a man that made
 The search of precious stones his trade,
 Who when he found a pearl indeed,
 Of price all others to exceed,
 He chose from all his wealth to part,
 And bought the jewel of his heart.

All parts must center in the whole.
This pearl's salvation of the soul,
And he that stedfastly denies
To deal in pomp and vanities,
Shall gain by tenure not to cease,
His Saviour and eternal peace.

(II, 857-8)

In this version of Matthew 13:45-6, we should note the Berkeleian attitude in the first line of the "Application," and also the light this sheds on that puzzling passage from Jubilate Agno: "For in my nature I quested for beauty, but God, God hath sent me to sea for pearls" (B1: 30). If the pearl is salvation of his soul, and the sea a sea of affliction, then Smart must rise above the sea, or return from it, having found himself and his proper role. Whether he did or not is for the reader to decide. In any event, we can see that in his last years Smart was still exploring the themes he had first articulated

much earlier. We can also see the close inter-relation of all the poetry, as each successive set of poems casts light on and explains the poems written before it and after it.

Although we can find the occasionally interesting thing in the Parables, it is the Hymns for the Amusement of Children that are much more fascinating. There Smart came closer to keeping the promise he made in the dedication of the Parables. The Hymns for Children were written while Smart was an inmate at King's Bench Prison, and in them he sings sweetly and wisely.

Here, Smart showed a great interest in the education of children. This bears out Botting's thesis that Smart had been at least a contributor, if not the editor, of the Lilliputian Magazine.⁸ Throughout these Hymns Smart emerges as kindly, humble, and generous. In these Hymns the hardened cynic and mild skeptic alike must feel that they are in the presence of a thoroughly good man. In the Hymns no child is blackened with original sin, and one would think no child had ever to be punished. Smart seems to embody all of the virtues he writes about, although the occasional swipes he takes at the Catholic church remind us that he too is human. Yet he even forgives the Catholics in some of the Hymns, and seems to have tolerance for everyone, as in "Hymn XXI: Generosity":

The Lord shed on the Holy Rood
His infinitely gen'rous blood,
Not for himself, but all;
Yea e'en for them that pierc'd his side,
In patient agony he died,
To remedy the fall.

(II, 983)

The poems repeat Smart's favorite themes, written simply and for the

last time. In the hymns "Fortitude" and "Temperance" Smart writes of praying without ceasing, praying on his knees, and fasting on his knees. A poor beggar in debtor's prison, he still has the kindness to write:

Then guide, O Christ, this little hand,
To deal thy bounties round the land;
To clothe and feed the hungry poor,
And to the stranger ope thy door.
(II, 965)

The same theme appears in "Prudence" and in "Beauty" and finally in "Pray Remember the Poor," where the idea is presented in "a Blake-like combination of vivid realism and childish simplicity":⁹

I just came by the prison door,
I gave a penny to the poor:
Papa did this good act approve,
And poor mama cried out for love.

Whene'er the poor comes to my gate,
Relief I will communicate;
And tell my Sire his sons shall be
As charitably great as he.
(II, 1000)

Ainsworth and Noyes further point out the likeness between Smart's "For Sunday" and Blake's "Holy Thursday" in Songs of Innocence, and Smart's "Moderation" and some of Blake's work.¹⁰

Yet not all is simple and beautiful. In "Melancholy," Smart explains how he can be frightened by his own ideas, and how he is full of sorrow:

How to begin, and how depart,
From this sad fav'rite theme,
The man of sorrow in my heart,
I at my own ideas start,
As dread as Daniel's dream.
(II, 987)

Through the melancholy, though, and the fits of depression, came flashes of the Song, as in the hymn "Truth" where David appears again:

The stars, the firmament, the sun,
God's glorious work, God's great design,
All, all was finished as begun,
By rule, by compass, and by line.

Hence David unto heav'n appeals,
'Ye heav'ns his righteousness declare';
His signet their duration seals,
And bids them be as firm as fair.

(II, 971-2)

Not only is the theme one that appears frequently in the Song, but even the imagery is reminiscent of that poem.

The listing of old techniques and similarities could go on, complete with appropriate quotations, but enough has been presented here to show that Smart could do what he set out to do: to write with purity, simplicity, and honesty. The picture that emerges from these Hymns is the same one we have seen emerging in all the poetry, although the edges are not as clearly defined, nor the verse as powerful as it was in some of the earlier works. The picture is still the picture of the only kind of man who could have written the poetry. The man is very clearly described by the verse.

To those who would still call Smart a neo-classic only, let Smart's own words answer, from the hymn "Learning":

Humanity's a charming thing,
And every science of the ring,
Good is the classic lore;
For these are helps along the road,
That leads to Zion's blest abode,
And heav'nly muse's store.

But greater still in each respect,
He that communicates direct,
The tutor of the soul;

Who without pain, degrees or parts,
 While he illuminates our hearts,
 Can teach at once the whole.
 (II, 977-78)

The world of the spirit is Smart's world, one which he had skilfully managed to blend with his world of learning. But it was the world of learning that was assimilated into the world of spirit, and not the other way around. The whole volume of Hymns, and perhaps the whole of the poet's life, is summarized in the appropriately titled last hymn, "The Conclusion of the Whole Matter":

Fear God -- obey his just decrees,
 And do it hand, and heart, and knees;
 For after all our utmost care
 There's nought like penitence and prayer.

Then weigh the balance in your mind,
 Look forward, not one glance behind;
 Let no foul fiend retard your pace,
 Hosanna! Thou hast won the race.
 (II, 1001)

The poet had come full circle, from childhood to childhood, from simplicity to simplicity. In the course of it, he assimilated a world of knowledge and experience into a unity, and then proceeded to give it back to a world that wasn't sure it wanted it. He moved from the ornate, the pedantic, the unnatural, to that which was direct, simple, and for him real. He found in the world of man and nature the world of spirit and the realm of the divine, and with that he allied himself. Freeing himself from the world of man, he rose above it. What he imagined, was real, because thoughts were real for Smart. As he developed, he became more certain of his own convictions and perceptions, and more surely stepped out on the little-trod path of the romantic.

It was a strange race that Smart won and the victory was probably Pyrrhic. Perhaps enough has been shown in this paper to indicate that he won the race by running a consistent course, and by starting twenty years before the group of romantics who were to follow him.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

¹C.D. Abbot, "The Date of Christopher Smart's Confinement", TLS, (Nov. 3, 1927), 790. See also C.D. Abbot, "Christopher Smart's Madness", PMLA, XLV (1930), 1014-22.

²Boswell, Letters, I, 39.

³Gray, Correspondence, II, 802. See also "Song to David", Critical Review, XL (1763), 324; "Song to David", Monthly Review, XXVII (1763), 320-1.

⁴Browning, Poems, 1151.

⁵R.D. Havens, "The Structure of Smart's 'Song to David'", RES, XIV (1938), 178-82.

⁶Ibid., 132.

⁷Pater, Appreciations, 241-261.

⁸Blaydes, Christopher Smart. This attempt, while somewhat strained at points, gives a fine analysis of Smart's earlier poetry.

⁹Oxford Universal Dictionary, 671.

¹⁰William Hazlitt, "On Gusto", in W.J. Bate, ed., Criticism: the Major Texts. (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1952), 301-03.

¹¹Grigson, Christopher Smart, 6.

¹²Ibid., 8. See also the account of Smart's years at Cambridge in Sherbo, Christopher Smart: Scholar, 23-57.

¹³Smart, Poems, ed. Norman Callan, I, 223. All further references to Smart's poems will be to volume and page numbers in this edition. The only exception is in the case of Jubilate Agno, where references will be to fragment and line numbers in Bond's editions.

¹⁴Northrop Frye, "Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility", in James L. Clifford, ed., Eighteenth Century English Literature, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 317-8.

¹⁵Crane, ed., Criticism, 361

¹⁶Ibid., 359-60.

¹⁷Frank B. Evans, "Thomas Taylor, Platonist of the Romantic Period", PMLA, LV (1940), 1067-8. Also Wimsatt and Brooks, Literary Criticism, 430-31.

¹⁸Robert Brittain, "Christopher Smart in the Magazines", Transactions of the Bibliographical Society: The Library, XXI (1940-41), 320-6. Also Roland B. Botting, "Christopher Smart and the Lilliputian Magazine", ELH, IX (1942), 286-7; Roland B. Botting, "Christopher Smart in London", Research Studies of the State College of Washington, VII (1939), 3-54.

¹⁹Grigson, Christopher Smart, 12.

²⁰Keats, Poetical Works, 371.

²¹Saintsbury, Nineteenth Century Literature, 89.

²²Smart, Poems, ed. Brittain, 273.

²³It is ironic that Smart was to die fifteen years after this illness, just as Hezekiah's life was prolonged by God for fifteen years.

²⁴Grigson, Christopher Smart, 10. See also Smart, Poems, ed. Callan, I, 161.

²⁵Wordsworth, Poetical Works, 735.

²⁶Crambo: a game in which one of the players gives a word to which each of the other players has to find a rhyme.

Chapter II

¹Grigson, Christopher Smart, 28.

²D.J. Greene, "Smart, Berkeley, The Scientists and the Poets. A Note on Eighteenth Century Anti-Newtonianism", JHI, XIV (1953), 327-53.

³Dobrée, Early Eighteenth Century, 279.

⁴Berkeley, Works, I, 180.

⁵Ibid., I, 195.

⁶Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 98. All further references to Jubilate Agno where it is clear that it is the poem being referred to, will be given in the body of the paper, and will refer to fragment and line numbers in this edition. The reference in this case would be B2: 395-6.

⁷Ibid., 98, note 3.

⁸Grigson, Christopher Smart, 28.

⁹Smart, Poems, ed. Brittain, 276.

¹⁰Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, B2: 650-2, 664.

¹¹Berkeley, Works, I, 291-339; 340-359.

¹²Ibid., 342.

¹³Ibid., 344.

¹⁴D.J. Greene, "Smart, Berkeley, The Scientists and the Poets: A Note on Eighteenth Century Anti-Newtonianism", JHI, XIV (1953), 341.

¹⁵Berkeley, Works, I, 109-10.

¹⁶D.J. Greene, "Smart, Berkeley, The Scientists and the Poets: A Note on Eighteenth Century Anti-Newtonianism", JHI, XIV (1953), 341.

¹⁷Blake, Poetry and Prose, 555.

¹⁸Berkeley, Works, II, 500.

¹⁹This appeared in four volumes in 1767.

²⁰From the "Preface" to Smart's translation of Horace. Cited by Bond in Smart, Jubilate Agno, 99, note 1.

²¹Berkeley, Works, I, 219.

²²Grigson, Christopher Smart, 29.

²³Pater, Appreciations, 257-8.

²⁴Ibid., 260.

²⁵There are further parallels not mentioned here, but they are not immediately related to our subject. These can largely be seen in D.J. Greene. "Smart, Berkeley, The Scientists and the Poets: A Note on Eighteenth Century Anti-Newtonianism", JHI, XIV (1953), 327-53.

²⁶Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 20.

²⁷Charles Parrish, "Christopher Smart's Knowledge of Hebrew", SP, LVIII (1961), 516-532.

²⁸Ibid., 532.

²⁹Ainsworth and Noyes, Christopher Smart, 15.

³⁰Sir Charles Mallet, "Education, Schools, and Universities", in A.S. Turbeville, ed., Johnson's England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), II, 209-42.

³¹Ibid., 219.

³²Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 20.

³³Robert Lowth, Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, trans. G. Gregory, (Boston: _____, 1815), 64. Cited by Wm. H. Bond, "Christopher Smart's Jubilate Agno", Harvard Literary Bulletin, IV (1950), 44.

³⁴Ibid., 44-5.

³⁵Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 20.

³⁶Charles Parrish, "Christopher Smart's Knowledge of Hebrew", SP, LVIII (1961), 516-532.

³⁷Birnbaum, ed., High Holyday Prayer Book: Rosh Hashanah, 259.

³⁸Proverbs 3:34.

³⁹Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 50, note 5.

⁴⁰Birnbaum, ed., High Holyday Prayer Book: Yom Kippur, 15-20.

⁴¹Stern, ed., Daily Prayers, 213.

⁴²Birnbaum, High Holyday Prayer Book: Yom Kippur, 106.

⁴³Birnbaum, High Holyday Prayer Book: Rosh Hashanah, 257.

⁴⁴Ibid., 251.

⁴⁵Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 106-08, 123.

Chapter III

¹Smart, Poems, ed. Brittain, 31

²Stuart Piggot, "New Light on Christopher Smart", TLS, June 13, 1929, 474.

³Boswell, Life of Johnson, II, 345.

⁴See above, chapter 1, note 1.

⁵The list is too lengthy to be presented here, but articles dealing with the subject are listed in the bibliography.

⁶Smart, Poems, ed. Hunter, I, xx.

⁷Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, B1: 124, 61.

⁸Hester Lynch Piozzi, "Piozziana", Gentleman's Magazine, CLXXXVI (1849), 24.

⁹Boswell, Life of Johnson, I, 397.

¹⁰R.D. Havens, "Assumed Personality, Insanity and Poetry", RES, N.S. IV (1953), 25-37.

¹¹Grigson, Christopher Smart, 20-24. See also Arthur Sherbo, "The Probable Time and Dating of Christopher Smart's 'Song to David', Psalms, and Hymns and Spiritual Songs", JEGP, LV (1956), 41-57.

¹²Sherbo, Christopher Smart: Scholar, 160.

¹³Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 20.

¹⁴Ibid., 66, note 4.

¹⁵Ibid., 67, note 4.

¹⁶Ibid., 54, note 6.

¹⁷See "The Author Apologizes to a Lady for His being a Little Man", I, 112.

¹⁸Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 61, note 2.

¹⁹Ibid., 155, note 4.

²⁰Smart, Jubilate Agno, B1: 46-51, which read:

Let Phuvah rejoice with Platycerotes, whose weapons of defense keep them innocent.
 For I this day made over my inheritance to my mother in consideration of her infirmities.
 Let Shimron rejoice with the Kite, who is of more value than many sparrows.
 For I this day made over my inheritance to my mother in consideration of her age.
 Let Sered rejoice with the Wittal -- a silly bird is wise unto his own preservation.
 For I this day made over my inheritance to my mother in consideration of her poverty.
 Let Elon rejoice with Attelabus, who is the Locust without wings.
 For I bless the thirteenth of August, in which I had the grace to obey the voice of Christ in my conscience.
 Let Jahleel rejoice with the Woodcock, who liveth upon suction and is pure from his diet.
 For I bless the thirteenth of August, in which I was willing to run all hazards for the sake of the name of the Lord.
 Let Shuni rejoice with the Gull, who is happy in not being good for food.
 For I bless the thirteenth of August, in which I was willing to be called a fool for the sake of Christ.

²¹Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 46, note 8.

²²Blaydes, Christopher Smart, 110-11.

²³Ibid., 111.

²⁴Smart, Jubilate Agno, ed. Bond, 62, note 1.

²⁵Blaydes, Christopher Smart, 110.

²⁶Archibald Lampman, "Ramblings on Thomas R. Cat", Toronto Globe, Feb. 13, 1892, 8.

²⁷Dearnley, The Poetry of Christopher Smart.

²⁸Smart, Poems, ed. Brittain, 279.

²⁹Dagon: National God of the Philistines, who was half man and half fish.

³⁰Smart, Poems, ed. Brittain, 281-2.

³¹Ibid., 288.

³²Ibid., 289.

³³Ibid., 290.

³⁴Ibid., 291.

³⁵Ainsworth and Noyes, Christopher Smart, 148.

³⁶Smart, Poems, ed. Brittain, 291.

Chapter IV

¹Smart, Poems, ed. Robert Brittain; Devlin, Poor Kit Smart; Blaydes, Christopher Smart; Broadbent, Christopher Smart: A Song to David; Tutin, A Song to David.

²Binyon, The Case of Christopher Smart, 14.

³Yost, The Poetry of the Gentleman's Magazine, 25, 35.

⁴Herbert M. Schueller, "The Use and Decorum of Music as Described in British Literature, 1700-1780", JHI, XIII (1952), 84.

⁵This summary is a combination of Smart's own, that of R.D. Havens in "The Structure of Smart's Song to David", RES, XIV (1938), 178, and this author's.

⁶Smart, Poems, ed. Brittain, 294.

⁷Ibid., 309.

⁸For a detailed account, see Karina Side, "Christopher Smart's Heresy", MLN, LXIX (1954), 316-19.

⁹Wordsworth, Prelude, Book XII, 208-18.

¹⁰Grigson, Christopher Smart, 28.

¹¹For a listing of the biblical references, see Tutin, A Song to David.

¹²William R. Hauser, "An Analysis of the Structure, Influence, and Diction of Christopher Smart's A Song to David", DA, XXIV (1963), 2012-13.

Chapter V

¹Dearnley, The Poetry of Christopher Smart, 213.

²Arthur Sherbo, "Survival in Grub Street: Another Essay in Attribution", Bulletin of the New York Public Library, LXIV (1960), 147-58.

³Dearnley, The Poetry of Christopher Smart, 216.

⁴Ibid., 218-225.

⁵The single existing copy of the second edition of Hymns for the Amusement of Children is dated 1772. No earlier edition is extant, but it is known that the work was first published in 1770.

⁶He was the eldest son of Bonnel Thornton, who had been the original editor of the Student when it first appeared in 1750. Smart later worked on the magazine with Thornton.

⁷Cited by Dearnley, The Poetry of Christopher Smart, 282.

⁸Roland Botting, "Christopher Smart and the Lilliputian Magazine", ELH, IX (1942), 286-87.

⁹Ainsworth and Noyes, Christopher Smart, 155.

¹⁰Ibid., 157, 159.

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